

**Delving into the Criminal Character: A Study of select Psychological Crime**

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**ANUSKHA MARIA FERNANDES**

21P011009

Under the Supervision of

**DR. ANJALI CHAUBEY**

Shenoi Goembab School of Languages and Literature  
Discipline of English



Goa University

Date: **APRIL 2023**

Shenoi Goembab School of  
Languages & Literature  
Goa University


Examined by:

Seal of the School

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I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation entitled, “Delving into the Criminal Character: A study of select Psychological Crime Fiction” is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Discipline of English at the Shenoι Goembab School of Languages and Literature, Goa University under the Supervision/Mentorship of Dr. Anjali Chaubey and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will be not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the dissertation.

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Anuskha Maria Fernandes  
21P011009  
Discipline of English  
Shenoι Goembab School of Languages  
and Literature

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Place: Goa University

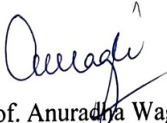
### COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation “**Delving into the Criminal Character: A study of select Psychological Crime Fiction**” is a bonafide work carried out by **Ms. Anuskha Maria Fernandes** under my supervision/mentorship in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Arts** in the Discipline of English at the Shenoj Goembab school of Languages and Literature, Goa University.



Dr. Anjali Chaubey  
Discipline of English

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023



Prof. Anuradha Wagle  
Dean  
Discipline of English  
Shenoj Goembab school of Languages and Literature  
Date: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
Place: Goa University

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Aims and Objectives**

The purpose of this dissertation is to establish crime fiction as a means to understand and study modern day criminal characters and motives. This would include exploring the methods and theories utilised in the creation of criminal characters in crime fiction. An in – depth analysis would be performed on these four texts namely, Dorothy B. Hughes’ *In a Lonely Place* (1947), Patricia Highsmith’s *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955), Thomas Harris’ *Red Dragon* (1981) and Alex Michaelides’ *The Silent Patient* (2019) to aid with the understanding of the different elements of crime fiction. The hypothesis would be justified with the inclusion of real-life criminal records that would show similarities amongst the crime fiction being studied.

#### **1.2 An Introduction to Crime Fiction**

Narratives centred around criminals, their acts and solving of the crime would be the apt way to define crime fiction. It is a -genre that surpasses all other genres in terms of popularity. The desire to discover, hear the unspoken, and decipher codes is central to crime fiction. The aspect of crime fiction being an intellectual puzzle or a thrilling action-packed narrative makes it great fun to read. In addition to that, this genre provides fresh and fascinating insights into the societies that produce it. It’s very status as a widely read and accessible literary

form means that it responds fast to change and is capable of incorporating societal and cultural changes into its writing.

Writer and Critic Edmund Wilson stated in his essay that was published in the year 1944 titled, *Why do people read Detective Fiction?* “Reading mysteries is a kind of minor vice that ranks between crossword puzzles and smoking” suggesting that element of mystery in crime fiction is what stirs up the addiction in readers. Previously, plot structures, narratives and the general form in crime fiction have received a considerable amount of attention but contemporary crime fiction has moved on from intense plot twists and weak characterisation. Contemporary crime fiction makes one lean towards crucial questions like what makes a man a criminal? And how many of the criminal’s actions could be justified? Thus, providing insights to curious minds on how a human was capable of carrying out a grave, brutal crime.

Crime fiction may have been regarded as a genre that is popular or that it was meant for ‘light reading’ or ‘escapist reading’ but it really is more complex than it appears. If read analytically, one can notice aspects of creative thinking and complex psychology concepts and theories utilised in crime fiction. So, this paper seeks to analyse the criminal character by treating the fictional murders as a means to delve deeper into the criminal’s mind.

### **1.2.1 History of Crime Fiction**

Contemporary scholars like John Scaggs, Richard Bradford and Stephen Knight assert that origins of crime fiction are found amongst the earliest narratives like the ancient Greek and Roman myths, the Old Testament stories dating from the fourth to the first century B.C. and from traditional mystery and puzzle stories from *One Thousand and One Nights*.

Crime fiction came to be known as a popular genre of fiction during the mid-1800s. Over the recent years it has managed to become a dominant genre in the cultural sphere - in



literature as well as in the film industry. Records of real-life crimes and criminals have heavily contributed towards the development of crime fiction over time. Tracing the history and development of crime fiction would show that the focus on crime and criminals in texts appeared in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Writer John Awddey's *Fraternity of Vagabonds* (1565) and Thomas Harman's *A Caveat or Warning* (1567) contained information about the criminal underworld in England, its structure, professions and language and was published in a sociological information and narrative form. These were then used by Renaissance writers like Thomas Dekkan (1570 – 1632) and Robert Greene (1556 – 1592) who expanded the narrative elements showing how different kinds of professional criminals worked. The best of these were two plays written by a prominent Renaissance author Ben Johnson *The Alchemist* (1610) and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) in which some of the central characters are professional criminals and the plot revolves around their criminal acts. Compared to the crime fiction that readers currently read, these literary works are quite distinctive. The crimes were never murders and no detectives were engaged. It focused on renaissance interests and society, specifically how prostitutes, pickpockets and con-artists profited from ignorant and credulous English citizens. This kind of literature was widely read up to the mid-seventeenth century. During this time there also existed a kind of literary genre about criminals. It was called 'The Broadside Sheet' (also called Broadside Ballad if written in rhymed verse). A broadside sheet was a large piece of paper that included stories, poems, songs and other texts accompanied by a crude woodcut picture and were sold cheaply on the streets. The ones regarding criminals claimed to be factual biographies of those who had been hanged or even their confessions before they were put to death. Criminal punishment up to the middle of the 19th century was public, hence this gave savvy printers an opportunity to start selling broadside sheets about the individual who was convicted and hanged. Although these texts didn't have any literary value, they did show the interest of English readers in criminal life.

The next phase in crime literature in English took place in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century when the new novel form was used by major writers to write stories about highwaymen, thieves, prostitutes and criminal rings. These stories portrayed the criminal as the central characters towards whom the readers felt sympathy and often supported them. Journalist Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) and writer Henry Fielding's *The Life of Jonathan Wild the Great* (1743) are examples of the same. Although the works are much more complex than those written earlier, they wouldn't classify as crime fiction in the contemporary sense since there were no mysteries about the crimes and no detectives. This led to the publication of fictional texts about criminals in the 1830 in which some continued the tradition of depicting the criminal as the central hero and others like Charles Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist* (1837 – 1838) which provided a more realistic version of the English underworld. These texts were still far from present crime fiction due to the same reasons.

Edgar Allen Poe was the first man to write crime fiction as we can define it today and his novel *The Murders in The Rue Morgue* (1841) marked the beginning of detective crime fiction in English. It was Poe that set the template for the crime fiction of the next century as his novel had elements of crime solving by the analytical, deductive and rational ability of an individual: the detective.

Charles Dickens who was known to be fascinated by crime examined the psychology of criminals in his stories. His interest in the police was also quite evident through his work. *Bleak House* was written by him in the year 1853 with one of the first fictional detectives 'Inspector Bucket' whose objective, expert, and fair approaches became the benchmark by which police officers were evaluated. Author Willkie Collins favoured the police and published a novel called *The Moonstone* (1868) featuring a highly talented police detective.

Year 1900 saw the success of Arthur Conan Doyle's character Sherlock Holmes. This further encouraged writers to try their hand at crime fiction which gave birth to many new variants in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

'Golden Age Crime Fiction' came about in the 1920s. It was a term originally used to denote the detective crime novels created between the two world wars, and immediately after it marked a high point in the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century crime fiction literature. Writers like Agatha Christie and Dorothy L. Sayers dominated this era.

With the development in America's society, new types of crime stories like Hard-boiled crime fiction saw emergence. Hard-boiled crime fiction developed around the same time as Golden Age Crime fiction. Dashiell Hammett was the first great writer in this genre beginning with short stories in *The Black Mask* (1920) and his first full length novel *Red Harvest* in the year 1929.

The 1950's showed many trends developing in crime fiction after World War II. These included the psychological crime stories, stories with war veterans as heroes, socio-critical crime stories etc.

All the components of modern crime fiction are a result of the genre's various stages of evolution. Simon Brett's *A Shock to The System* (1984) and Stephen Dobyn's *Boy in The Water* (1999) were one of the first contemporary crime fiction novels.

### **1.2.2 Elements and Branches of Crime Fiction**

Crime fiction is a stimulating genre full of surprises like plot twists, cliff-hangers, intellectual challenges that capture the attention of the reader. The different characteristics that define crime fiction are as follows:

- A crime - typically a murder with additional offences either occurring as a result of the murder or serving as its catalyst.
- A detective – a character who frequently solves crimes and is morally upright, intellectual and rational.
- A criminal/villain – a physically and/or metaphorically ugly and/or deformed character.
- Clues or Red Herrings – these are essential as they lead to the solving of the crime. The clues are often difficult to see and can only be seen by the exceptional intellect of the sleuth.
- Variety of suspects with different motives.
- Collection of evidence circling the crime and its victims.
- Danger or conflict that must be tackled by the hero.
- A satisfactory conclusion in which the protagonist has carried out justice and brought about restoration of order to the world.

Crime fiction further branched out into the following sub-genres:

I. Detective Fiction – It is defined as a type of popular literature which focuses on the investigation of the crime and revealing of the culprit. The classic elements of a detective story are as follows: 1) A crime that appears to be perfect; 2) Suspects who have been falsely accused and to whom circumstantial evidence points. 3) The blunders of naive police officers 4) The detective's superior intelligence and observational skills and (5) The frightening and unforeseen outcome, where the detective uncovers how the personality of the guilty party was learned. Detective stories are mainly based on the

idea that evidence that seems to be solid and convincing usually turns out to be unimportant information. Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* (1868), Anna Katharine Green's *The Leavenworth Case* (1878) and Fergus Hume's *Mystery of a Hansom Club* (1886) were some works that gained phenomenal commercial success.

II. Classic Whodunnit - This sub-genre shares many characteristics with detective fiction, such as revelation of the crime and a detective but its appeal stems from the fact that readers become as invested in the case as the detective. This is because the clues are presented in a manner that gives readers the tools, they need to solve the case. Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), Agatha Christie's *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926) and Dorothy L. Sayers' *Lord Peter Views the Body* (1928) are some examples of the same.

III. Courtroom Drama – A sub-genre that includes mysteries that unfold through the justice system and the defence attorney proves the innocence of his client by locating the real perpetrator. Robert Traver's *Anatomy of a Murder* (1958), Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) and Scott Turow's *Presumed Innocent* (1986) are some courtroom drama works.

IV. Cosy crime fiction – mysteries that takes place typically in a small town with a middle-class setting and all of the suspects present and familiar with one another. The murder is solved by friendly police, a private detective who is eccentric, and an amusing sidekick or amateur sleuth. There is no realistic portrayal of the wrongdoing or grisly subtleties of the homicide. The tone is generally light, comedic and comforting. Examples of the same are Agatha Christie's *Murder at the Vicarage* (1930) and Marion Chesney's *Agatha Raisin and the Quiche of Death* (1992) which was written under her pseudonym M. C. Beaton.

- V. Forensic crime fiction – This sub-genre features a crime solved through the forensics laboratory and it also include many details and scientific procedures utilised to analyse physical evidence. The lead character is usually played by a woman who is a scientist or a pathologist. Examples are Patricia Cornwell's *Post Mortem* (1990), Ridley Pearson's *The Angel Maker* (1993) and Kathy Reich's *Death du Jour* (1999).
- VI. Hard-Boiled crime fiction – This sub-genre of crime fiction originated in America. It is defined by its inclusion of graphic and gruesome details of the crimes committed and these were usually violent or sexual in nature. These stories often revolve around psychopaths, serial killers and detectives with a deeply flawed character. Dashielle Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* (1929), Raymond Chandler's *The Little Sister* (1949) and Patricia Highsmith's *Strangers on a Train* (1950) are some well-known works of Hard-Boiled fiction.
- VII. The Caper Story – This sub-genre is told from the criminal's perspective and the crimes are committed in full view of the reader. The activity of the police and detective may be included but they are not the focus point of the story. Michael Crichton's *The Great Train Robbery* (1975) and Lawrence Sanders' *Capers* (1980) are examples of Caper crime fiction.
- VIII. Police Procedurals – This type of crime fiction has the investigator solving the case in ways the police would, regardless of how peculiar the crime might be, the investigation is constantly grounded in a practical depiction of police work. Evan Hunter's *Cop Hater* (1956) and Michael Connelly's *The Concrete Blonde* (1994) are one of the famous police procedural fictions.
- IX. Psychological Suspense – A sub-genre that appeals to the intellect. Certain works of literature could be categorized under multiple genres such as horror, thriller, suspense,

mystery, and psychological fiction. These stories focus greatly on psychological activity rather than intense physical action and the complex storyline provides an ‘edge of your seat’ quality through the element of building tension and uneasiness. The tone of these stories is generally chilling and ominous. Daphne Du Maurier’s *The Rebecca Notebook: and Other Memories* (1938), Stephen King’s *Misery* (1987) and Thomas Harris’ *The Silence of the Lambs* (1988) are classic examples of this genre.

X. Thriller – Thriller crime fiction utilise elements like quick-pacing, frequent action and clever protagonists who have to foil the plans of a much more powerful and better equipped criminal. Suspense, cliff-hangers and red herrings are some of the literary devices used extensively. Although they overlap with mystery stories, they can be differentiated by their plot structure – in a Thriller, the hero must prevent the plan of the villain from unfolding which is different from revealing a crime that has already been committed. Some examples of Thriller crime fiction are Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood* (1995), Jeffrey Deaver’s *The Bone Collector* (1997) and Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl* (2012).

### **1.3 Psychological Thriller as a Genre**

Thrillers - a diverse type of a fiction although they share many key elements of mystery fiction. Usually there’s conflict that arises from a crime (robbery, murder or a disappearance) and the plot is then driven around trying to solve the conflict, this then results in a thriller. It is a genre that is packed with suspense in an ‘edge of your seat’ narrative and characters who are often driven by fear, paranoia and the desire for vengeance. Thrillers branch out into crime thrillers, legal thrillers, adventure thrillers, spy thrillers and psychological thrillers. It can be defined by its dark atmosphere, mind-boggling plots and jaw-dropping twists. The central

characteristic that differentiates psychological thrillers from the rest is that it explores the deepest, darkest corners of a human mind.

Psychological thrillers are one of the most modern forms of literature. Early genres like Gothic fiction, the sensation novel and the detective story are associated with this modern genre because of the similarities. Its growth can also be credited to Gothic fiction, Freudian psychoanalysis and psychological realism in fiction along with the rise in mass-market publishing. Edgar Allan Poe and Henry James are important figures in the field of this genre as it was through their work that writers began exploring and trying their hand at dark and mysterious thrillers.

“The mind of a man is capable of anything – because everything is in it, all the past as well as the future.” – (Conrad,109)

This quote highlights the nature of the human mind and how it can be understood as well as be incomprehensible, how it can be predictable as well as unpredictable, irrational and unreliable. So, what does this genre really entail?

It involves narratives that are told from the perspective of an unreliable narrator or a psychologically troubled character. The characters are driven by fixation or violence, with an emphasis on inward strain and struggle. Within each psychological thriller, the core mystery is based on the internal functions of a psychologically disturbed mind. Some other motifs of psychological thrillers are revenge, severe psychological illness, trauma or memory loss, obsessive investigations and psychotic antagonists that seem beyond the reach of law.

The year 1938 saw the release of the first psychological thriller *Rebecca* published by Daphne Du Maurier. Two important writers who are credited for popularizing more psychologically inclined dark thrillers in the 1950s are William Faulkner (1897 – 1962) and James M. Cain (1892 – 1977). William Faulkner’s *Sanctuary* published in the year 1931 was



about the rape and abduction of an upper-class Mississippi girl. Although the author said he wrote it purely with the intention of making income, authors like Kevin Railey stated that it explored Freudian psychosexual behaviour and attitudes, particularly the element of extreme violence that resulted from dominance and psychosexual paternalism. James M. Cain's first novel *The Postman Always rings Twice* (1934) gained commercial success. His works are an image of his interest in the psychological working behind the façade of modernism.

Freud's theories gained popularity and became more mainstream in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s and throughout the 1960s writers began writing stories that would talk about the actions and thoughts of the psychologically disturbed. The writers responsible for the popularisation of Freudian themes were Cornell Woolrich (1903 – 1968) and Horace McCoy (1897 – 1955). By the end of 1950s all the cultural elements of the contemporary form of this genre were made known and this produced a lot of writers in the year 1970 who stressed on these different elements. Works of authors like Sidney Sheldon, Lawrence Sanders, Mary Higgins Clark and other famous writers marked the bloom of psychological thrillers in the year 1970 and 1980 as they popularized all elements of the genre. Some important works are Mary Higgins Clark's *Where are the Children?* (1975) and *A Stranger is Watching* (1977), Stephen King's *The Shining* (1977) and *The Dead Zone* (1979) and the most important of these writers is Thomas Harris and his Hannibal Lecter series: *Red Dragon* (1981), *Silence of the Lambs* (1988), *Hannibal* (1999) and *Hannibal Rising* (2006).

Psychological Thriller is a genre that seeks to reveal the limit of knowledge of one's own self, the unknown and uncontrollable urges of the human mind and the inability of humans to comprehend the inner workings of human psyche.

## 1.4 Literature Review

The research paper, *Crime Fiction: A Global Phenomenon* published in the year 2016, in the Issue of IAFOR Journal of Literature and Librarianship attempts to trace the history of crime fiction and how it was a source of providing assurance that the authorities are protecting their people from injustice. It analyses the character of Daniel in the Bible as an investigator. It also mentions how crime narratives existed in the Arabic culture and could be traced back to the 12th century. The paper aimed to assess the global and historical reach of crime fiction and the reason for its universality. It studies the shift of emphasis from ‘moral metaphysics and ethical essentialism’ to ‘romantic or post-romantic obsession with heroic individuals’ that had occurred from the story of Susanna to the stories by Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie. Some of the books that had been assessed for the research are Chandler’s Philip Marlowe, Mickey Spillane’s Mike Hammer, Daniell Hammett’s Red harvest etc. With an example of HRF Keating’s Inspector Ghote novels, the paper attempts to show that some crime novels and stories contribute to the ills they appear to expose by reinforcing long outdated stereotypes of India and Indians. It concludes by stating that crime fiction is both ancient and global.

The next paper was published in Shodhganga in the year 2016 titled, *Stories uncovered approaches to the study of select Indian English Crime and Detective fiction*. This research studies Indian English crime and detective fiction from a sociological, feminism-induced and game-theory based approach. Further it discusses the development of crime fiction from Gothic Literature in the 19th century along with a brief account of British and American crime fiction. The research was conducted on the basis of nine crime and detective fiction novels by seven Indian authors. It shows crime fiction from a sociological point of view – how different social ills engender crime. In the course of the document, we come across a feministic approach towards crime fiction where a woman is looked at as a victim, as a criminal and as a detective.

Further it also analyses some crime fiction from a game-theory point of view where it delves into the rationality, the framework and important tools utilised by a literary theorist.

*Crime Fiction as a Popular Science* is a paper that was published in the issue of NORLIT 2009 and it discusses the role and function of crime fiction as a contemporary medium of popular science. It also throws light on the increasing dominance of the genre in the cultural sphere. This research examines the Swedish crime writer - Åsa Nilsson and her series of police novels and how crime fiction novels produced in Sweden involve very limited use of science. Throughout the course of the research, they have attempted to show crime fiction as a contribution towards spreading knowledge about scientific research and method.

The paper, *Traditional and Modern Aspects of Crime Literature in Hard-Boiled Detective Fiction* was published in ResearchGate and it has discussed about the process of shaping of post-war American Crime Literature especially hard-boiled crime fiction after the period of domination of the classic English Detective Fiction. It performs an analysis on the most crucial distinctive features of hard-boiled crime fiction as well as looking into the features that differentiate it from a traditional detective novel. According to the research conducted, the crucial elements of hard-boiled detective stories are the urban setting, a neutral style, colloquial and straightforward language, devoid of rhetoric and pathos and a graphic, true to life depiction of events. A reference is made to novels of authors like Dashielle Hammett, Raymond Chandler, James M. Cain, Paul Auster and Eugène Sue.

The last research paper is titled, *Criminal Psychology and Crime Fiction: An Interdisciplinary approach*. It was published in the year 2021 in the 4th Issue of Annals of R.S.C.B. Keeping in mind the entry of Asian writers in the sphere of public attention, the research is conducted on the basis of two novels by Keigo Higashiro – *The Devotion of Suspect X* (2011) and *Malice* (2014).

This particular research paper delves into how criminal profiling and application of criminal psychology complements physical evidence. It provides details about crime scene and offender profiling with respect to the two novels chosen by the researcher. The research further claims the importance of the study of criminal psychology and shows how the researcher seeks to open up more possibilities, so that the art of writing crime fiction can be looked upon as a science in itself.

## **1.5 Methodology**

The method of study utilised in this dissertation is close reading of the texts and conducting an in-depth textual analysis on the selected crime fiction by using concepts and theories in criminology. This would establish crime fiction as an informative and insightful genre that helps readers understand criminal behaviour.

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Chapter One comprises of the aims and objectives of this study, followed by information about crime fiction, its origins, features and branches. Additionally, it aids in the understanding of the psychological thriller genre closely.

Chapter Two is an analysis conducted on criminology, its definition and historical developments along with the methods and theories utilised in that field of study. Furthermore, this chapter also shows the relationship between crime and psychology. Chapter Three is dedicated to the analysis of the ‘criminal character.’ This consists of introduction and breakdown of the characters based on the theories laid out in chapter two. Chapter Four attempts a comparative study between fictional and real-life criminals. Chapter Five is the final and concluding chapter, followed by the bibliography.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Criminology – An Analysis**

#### **2.1 An Introduction to Criminology**

“At his best, man is the noblest of all animals; separated from Law and Justice, he is the worst.” – Aristotle.

The message Aristotle conveys through this particular quote is important to understand the law and justice system. He says that man is a social animal and the sole creature to possess intelligence, a sense of right and wrong. One cannot expect the same moral and ethical behaviour from animals. Aristotle believes that man is at his best when he has his morals in check and a rational behaviour but when man starts neglecting ethical and moral codes and the behaviour becomes irrational, inhumane even, he becomes the worst creature of all. Thus, to keep man from straying away from the right path it is important that social and moral order is maintained in societies. This can only be possible through the implementation of law and justice and these are products of studies like criminology and penology.

The study of crime, criminals and criminal justice is a widely accepted definition of criminology. It can also be defined as the scientific study of crime as a social phenomenon. It is essential to look at the other ways jurists have defined criminology to gain detailed information about the same.

Criminology, as defined by Coleman and Norris, involves examining the nature of crime, the individuals who commit it, the factors that contribute to criminal behaviour, the

creation of criminal laws, and the implementation of law enforcement and measures to control criminal activity.

Professor Kenny defined it as a branch of criminal science which deals with the causes, analysis and prevention of crimes.

Sutherland had a more comprehensive approach towards his definition of criminology. He states that criminology is a body of knowledge regarding crime and it being a social phenomenon and the process of making laws, breaking laws and reactions towards breaking of laws.

Professor Gillian states that, “It is not the humanity within the criminals, but the criminality within the humans which need to be curbed through effective administration of criminal justice.” This can be achieved through criminology as it has played a role in reforming criminal laws and the criminal justice system. The findings of this study have influenced authorities like judges, prosecutors, probation officers and lawyers to understand crime and criminals and to develop effective and just sentences as well as treatment facilities for criminals.

### **2.1.1 Branches of Criminology**

Criminology studies the phenomenon of criminality in its entirety i.e., the whole of criminal science which includes sentencing, punishment, laws, rehabilitation, procedures and crime detection. This is done by dealing with the psychiatric, medico-psychological, biological and sociological aspects of criminology and other aspects related to it. It is further divided into two sections:

- i. Theoretical/Pure Criminology
- ii. Applied/Practical Criminology

Theoretical Criminology is studied under the following branches:

1. Criminal Anthropology – Anthropology is considered to be a study of humanity and the study of external influences on individuals. Criminal anthropology is an approach that seeks to understand the personality of the criminal in physical terms. Cesare Lombroso (1835 – 1909) a well-known Italian criminologist was the first to propose this view and he emphasized that certain physical traits of individuals were indicative towards criminal behaviour. Criminal anthropology is a field of science that studies crime in a scientific way wherein Lombroso states that a person would be a born criminal and this would be evident through specific physical features. Lombroso's theory was based on an idea called 'Atavism.' This idea states that criminals come from a group of humans who regressed in evolutionary advancement. Lombroso believed that physical characteristics were suggestive of mental degeneration and this leads to criminal activity. Some of the characteristics he stated were:

- Hooked noses
- Downset eyes
- Taller/Shorter than average
- Asymmetry of the face
- Tattoos on the body
- Sloping forehead
- Oblique eyelids
- Missing earlobes
- Bumps or protrusions around the head

- Projection of lower face and jaw
- Prolongation of the coccyx bone

This theory however faced a lot of criticism because of the racist nature of the qualifications of a born criminal. Most of the characteristics he described were features of non-white individuals. The presence of characteristic bias when data was gathered obstructed this theory as it could not be tested appropriately. This theory also did not account for individuals with physical characteristics that was an outcome of being a part of low socio-economic status and inability to have access to adequate amount of food resources. For example, Malnourishment would misshapen bone structure.

2. Criminal Sociology - This is based on American sociologist and the most influential criminologist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Edwin Sutherland's (1883 – 1950) Differential Association Theory and it claims that criminal behaviour is a process of learning through social interaction with other criminals. He states that a person will be a criminal if he possesses prior attitudes that favour violations of the law. Learning of criminal behaviour becomes all the more likely when there is more contact with people or groups that violate the law and less contact with those who abide by it. However, Sutherland's theory of differential association stands for a rehabilitative ideal. This means that if criminal attitudes can be learnt, they can logically be deduced and re-learned or compliant behaviour, attitudes and rationalism can be achieved.

Therefore, the goal of justice and society is to surround criminals with non-criminals and to dissolve social spaces in which people live predominantly with deviant motives and actions. Furthermore, criminal law must be based on



rehabilitation of the perpetrators. Sutherland's theory was criticised because of the theoretical gaps in his concept and this then made way for the development of theoretical extensions.

One example would be the extension of Sutherland's theory by Ronald L. Akers which included a detailed breakdown of the learning process (conditioning, social learning, observing etc). despite this the theory was accused because it did not account for the already existing criminal from who the traits are passed on and it also neglected the fact that different individuals can possess varying cognitive abilities.

3. Criminal Psychology – A branch that relates the emotional aspect of human nature to criminality. It can also be defined as the study of the thoughts and behaviour of criminals. Psychologists like Henry Herbert Goddard (1866-1957) had found through frequent cases that most of the juvenile and adult offenders were mentally deficient and this led to the conclusion a major cause of the crime was limitation of the intellect. The 'mentally deficient' were considered both intellectually and morally less capable of adapting to modern society and hence they resorted to ways that are considered primitive to meet their needs – such as crime.
4. Criminal Psycho-Neuro-Pathology – This branch of studies is influenced by works of Dr. Glueck and Sigmund Freud and it deals with careful examination of the various constituents and factors of crime such as mental illness, stress, disorganization in society, anti-social behaviour, psychopathological mindsets, physical disorders etc. Neuro-criminology is an emerging field that utilises brain imaging techniques and other principles of neuro-science to attempt to study, understand, predict and avert crime.

5. Penology – The branch of criminology that focuses on the principles and methods that society employs to prevent and suppress criminal behaviour and is also known as the philosophy and practice of criminal justice. Penology still represents the policy of inflicting punishment on the criminal as a consequence of his own actions, but it may also sensibly reach out to cover different approaches that are not punitive in nature such as medical treatment, probation and education which aims towards the cure and rehabilitation of the criminal. This is the acknowledged definition of penology.
6. Victimology – This branch of criminology is fairly modern and deals with those who have been subjected to criminal activities also known as the victims. Its focus is the relationship between the victim and the criminal and it examines the cause and nature of the ensuing affliction. It keeps check on whether the victim and criminals were complete strangers, family, friends, acquaintances or partners and why that specific individual was chosen as a target. This study came to be known about during the 1940s and 50s when some criminologist examined the interaction between the two parties. They raised the possibility that certain victims might be responsible for their misfortune. An example to understand this better would be, irresponsible behaviour by intoxicated customers in a bar often would attract the attention of thieves.

Applied or Practical criminology is defined as the science concerned with the application of criminology to the real-world problems of crime and criminal justice. It is critical and aims to find answers to particular issues of crime and justice, as well as to problematize proposed approaches.

## **2.2 Historical Development of Criminology**

Over the years, criminologists have come up with different theories to understand why crime is committed by humans. Theories to answer mind-boggling questions like, why did the person resort to something so inhumane? Is criminality abnormal? Is there a solution? Can crime be erased from the world?

Tracing the historical development of criminology, three types of theories can be observed: Classical theories, Positivists theory and Social-constructionist theories

The Classical School of Criminology: An unfamous Italian lawyer Cesare Beccaria published a book in the year 1764 which included essays on Crime and Punishment. As it is well known about the punitive techniques in the Early Ages - the offenders were subjected to harsh torture devices that would torment and even kill. Some were mercilessly tortured and executed and this was mainly because of no systematic and logical justice system. Beccaria was influenced by the Enlightenment philosophers and he sought to reform the justice system in order to transform it into a fairer and more humane one.

In his essays, he argued for punishment methods other than physical punishments and death by incorporating punishment in a legal system. He also challenged the traditional belief that the legal system was based on religion and that the cause of crime was because the criminal was like the devil (fallen from grace). Instead, he believed that crime was committed solely because of the individual's choice (operation of free will) and that criminal methods were opted for when the rewards of crime exceeded the pains resulting from the commission of the crime. He saw crime as an individual's choice not compulsion. This being his central idea, he developed a justice system which specified that punishments should fit the crime (it should be just enough to counterbalance the pleasure of crime), that punishments should not be overly severe but instead can be swift and sure which would provide maximum

effectiveness, that confessions cannot be achieved by force/threat and that death penalty was not necessary.

Within 10 years of his publication, Beccaria was celebrated as a great legal thinker and the system of justice he described soon became the model for democracies all around the world. He suggested that the justice system should utilise ideas and methods of science in order to be structured. Thus, Beccaria came to be known as the father of the classical school of criminology, first school of criminological thought. In this school, the primary focus is the justice system, the definition of crime is behaviours prohibited by the state and punished by the state.

In the year 1876, Italian physician Cesare Lombroso's publication of *Criminal Man* transformed how everyone thought about criminals. The first edition of his work stated that criminals exhibited physical characteristics that closely resembled animals. It was clear that this idea was a result of him being influenced by Darwin's attempt to introduce the concept of evolution into scientific and popular thinking through his book, *On the Origin of Species* which was published in the year 1856. Lombroso stated that crime was a result of inferior development and that the physical appearance of the criminal resulted in this inferior intellect and moral development.

In 1885, Raffaele Garofalo, Lombroso's student, also known as the father of Criminology, published his work *Criminologia* and used the term 'Criminology' to refer to the science of explaining crime. In spite of the many works on criminology as a field of study, it only emerged as a sign of new science and justice in the 1940s. For instance, the American society founded as an association of police professors in 1941 and the first American School of Criminology opened in 1950 at the university of California, Berkeley.

After Beccaria's work, criminologists did not pay attention to the criminal justice system for nearly 200 years. Instead, the focus shifted to Lombroso's criminological traditions which involved searching for the causes of crime as the main focus until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. During this period, the search of the causes of crime underwent four phases of theoretical development, namely single factor reduction, systemic reductionism, multidisciplinary theories and interdisciplinary theories.

#### 1. Single Factor Reduction:

This was based on Lombroso's proposal that a single factor could account for all criminal behaviour that is a failure of evolution. This theory claimed that a single factor could explore the entire range of crime and types of criminals. However, others soon followed and came up with their single factor single factor explanations for crime, such as mental illness, traumatic past, loss of faith/religion. However, this approach was short lived as research showed that criminals could be distinguished from non-criminals on the basis of multiple factors.

#### 2. Systemic Reduction:

This was based on explaining a phenomenon solely from the perspective of one knowledge system or discipline. Although it expanded beyond sociology, the sociological perspective is what dominated criminological theory for many years. Many criminological texts include discussions of crime causation into distinct sections based on sociological, psychological and biological explanations, treating each as separate explanations for crime. This theory was attributed to the department of sociology and led to a number of sociological theories dominating the criminological sphere. For instance, criminal behaviour was associated with poverty and social environments that normalised criminal behaviour. This theory was also criticised because it largely neglected personality and biology.

### 3. Multidisciplinary Approaches:

It came to be known that sociologists, other disciplines like psychology, biology, anthropology began to consider their interest in learning the causation of crime and using their respective disciplines to understand crime. Through all the research, gradually a model emerged that is still relevant today: the multidisciplinary explanation of criminal behaviour. The model stated that the behaviour of criminals can only be explained and understood using all social and behavioural sciences, including biology, psychology, economics, sociology, anthropology etc. The most important figures of this approach were Dr. Sheldon and Dr. Eleanor Glueck as they attempted a series of longitudinal studies to find factors responsible for juvenile and adult criminal behaviour.

### 4. Interdisciplinary Approach:

This approach states that more than one discipline is needed to explain criminal behaviour. Unlike the multidisciplinary approach, this goes beyond using contributions of different disciplines instead it is an integration of all these contributions from various disciplines. It focuses on bringing perspectives together and not encouraging a clash of perspectives based on the fact that only one of them is 'correct'. It recognises that the relationships between these perspectives are just as important as their explanations. Interdisciplinary theory incorporates aspects from all explanatory perspectives and seeks to identify how each explanation affects and does not negate the others.

During the mid-20th century, the focus of criminology shifted towards rehabilitation and the treatment of offenders. The rehabilitation model emphasized the importance of addressing the underlying causes of criminal behaviour, such as drug addiction or mental illness, through counselling and other forms of therapy. This approach was later criticized for being too lenient on offenders and failing to hold them accountable for their actions.

In the late 20th century, the focus of criminology shifted towards a more punitive approach, with a renewed emphasis on deterrence and punishment. This was driven by concerns about rising crime rates and a belief that the criminal justice system had become too lenient. The tough-on-crime approach was characterized by longer prison sentences, mandatory minimums, and three-strikes laws.

Today, criminology is a multi-disciplinary field that draws on a range of theories and approaches. It encompasses a broad range of topics, from the causes of crime to the effectiveness of different forms of punishment. Some of the key areas of research in criminology include the impact of technology on crime, the psychology of criminal behaviour, and the role of race and ethnicity in the criminal justice system.

In conclusion, the development of criminology has been shaped by a range of social, cultural, and historical factors. From its roots in ancient civilizations to its current state as a complex and multi-disciplinary field, criminology has evolved over time to reflect changing attitudes towards crime and punishment. While there is still much to learn about the causes of criminal behaviour, the study of criminology has made significant strides in helping us understand and prevent crime.

## **2.3 Methods of Criminology**

Criminological methods refer to the techniques and approaches used by criminologists to study and understand criminal behaviour and its causes. Some of the important methods are as follows:

**Surveys:** This is the most frequently used method of observation and gathering data. The process involves the collection of information from large and representative sample sources as well as through the interviews conducted of criminals. This method is useful for understanding the prevalence of crime.

Experimental Research: This method is believed to be one of the best ways to examine cause and effect relationships between different factors and criminal behaviours. The method involves the manipulation of one or more variables to test their effects and it can be conducted in laboratories or in the field. It is an effective way to study crime prevention as well as the psychological and physiological factors that influence criminal behaviour.

Case Study: Another important method in criminology is Case Study. This method involves conducting in-depth investigations into specific crimes and criminal behaviours. This method aids in providing intricate information about individual cases as well as in gaining broader insights into the various factors like social, economic and cultural factors that contribute towards criminal behaviours. Case studies also delve into the experiences of victims and the dynamics of the criminal justice system.

Statistical analysis: This method used by criminologists to study crimes and its causes by involving the use of quantitative data and statistical techniques to identify patterns, trends, and correlations in criminal behaviour. This method is particularly useful for identifying risk factors for criminal behaviour, as well as for evaluating the effectiveness of crime prevention and intervention programs.

Apart from these most important criminological methods, some of the other methods that stand out are: Observational research wherein the process involves observing criminal behaviour in its natural setting, such as in neighbourhoods or prisons, to gain insight into the causes of criminal behaviour, comparative research that involves comparing crime rates and criminal justice systems across different countries or regions to better understand the factors that contribute to crime and content analysis which involves analysing media reports, legal documents, and other written materials to gain insight into how crime and criminal justice are portrayed in society.



These and many other techniques are used by criminologists to gain insights into criminal behaviour. By combining these methods, criminologists can develop a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of crime, and develop effective strategies for preventing and responding to criminal behaviour.

## **2.4 Criminal Profiling**

It is the duty of the Law to protect the society from criminals and their actions. Law abiders like the police and the FBI utilise different techniques of induction and deduction to find out details of the perpetrator and also to prevent further damage from the same offender. This method of learning about the perpetrator based on the crime scene created by the same is called Criminal Profiling. The term was coined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the 1970s. It is a branch of Forensics that deals with understanding details of the offender through the crime scene, evidence, witnesses and victims. It helps the investigator paint a social and psychological picture of the criminal by inferring the physical, habitual, emotional and vocational characteristics of the subject, this aids law enforcement agencies to predict future offenses and victims so that they may act accordingly.

Credible sources state that this concept originally began with the study of clues, done by the Scotland Yard Police Force in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, followed by the investigation of the crime and then, the concept of analysing the psyche of the criminal branched out. Offender profiling techniques were used first during the serial killer Jack the Ripper's reign in the Whitechapel district of London. This was in the year 1888 when it was discovered that he would murder female prostitutes and also mutilate their abdomens and slit their throats. The examination of the way the criminal executed the murders led the investigators into thinking that he had some analytical and surgical knowledge. Thomas Bond, the police surgeon was then asked to examine the case. He based his study on the victims and their post mortem notes and came up with a profile of the criminal that was centred around his modus operandi

and personality traits which stated that the murderer seemed physically strong and daring. Bond also stated that the criminal did not have anatomical or surgical knowledge but was purely driven by erotic and homicidal mania, which led to the conclusion that the criminal had an abnormal sexual condition similar to satyriasis (Satyriasis – excessive sexual desire in a man.)

Jack the Ripper was also known for the letters that he had sent to the police filled with threats and gory unsettling information, but later it was also said that some of the letters were written by some journalist trying to seek attention. In spite of all the efforts put in to try and understand the killer in order to catch him, it was vain as the killer remained unidentified.

Forensic psychologists and psychiatrists started using criminal profiling methods to assess the psyche of Adolf Hitler during World War II. This helped mental health research organisations and forensic departments gather information about different types of criminals. The case of the ‘Mad Bomber’ in the 1950s proved the effectiveness of criminal profiling. A New York based psychiatrist, Dr. James A. Brussels facilitated the successful capture of George Metesky, who had set off 37 bombs in different places in the city from the year 1940-1956. The profile created by Dr. James based on the crime scene evidence and notes left by the bomber included many facts about the criminal like his age, origin and mental condition.

#### Basic Approaches to Criminal Profiling techniques:

1. Investigative Psychology Approach - This approach to criminal profiling is based on the assumption that criminals behave in predictable ways, and that the ways they behave can be identified through analysis of crime scene evidence. It utilises already established psychological theories to predict and prevent the criminal from striking again.
2. Geographical Approach - This can be defined as an approach that is used to deduce links between crimes and suggestions about the place where criminals reside and work. The patterns in the location and the timing are examined.

3. Clinical Approach – This approach utilises psychological insights and clinical psychology to investigate the crime. This approach is also usually directed towards criminals who are most likely to be suffering from mental disorders. The steps include collecting information about the crime, developing a hypothesis based on the available information and then the hypothesis is evaluated. The goal of this approach is also to identify patterns of behaviour that may be associated with criminal activity and use that information to develop a profile of the offender.
4. Typological Approach - The typological approach involves analysing the characteristics of crime scenes to group offenders with similar traits into distinct categories. In this approach, criminal profilers examine various factors such as the offender's age, gender, education, employment status, social and family history, and psychological makeup to create a profile of the criminal. The profiler then compares this profile to other known offenders to determine whether there are any similarities or patterns that can be used to identify the perpetrator.

There are two primary methods of criminal profiling: Top – Down Approach based technique and Bottom – Up Approach based technique.

Top – Down Approach: The phrase 'top-down' refers to an approach that starts with the big picture and then gradually fills in the details. This approach helps investigators identify characteristics like the lifestyle and personality of the criminal. It also relies on utilising pre – existing knowledge about certain criminal behaviours and characteristics to form hypotheses about the offenders identify and motives. This approach is an American approach and it came about by interviewing 36 sexually motivated serial killers including Ted Bundy to find out early warning signs and possible triggers. The data then gathered by the investigators helped put the criminals in typologies (groups of criminals displaying different clusters of behaviours and attitudes). Criminal investigations have grouped

criminals based on the characteristics of the crime into two categories: Disorganised and Organised criminals. Disorganised criminals are those criminals that have a physically or mentally traumatic past, they are usually socially and sexually inadequate with low IQ and they exhibit random, disoriented behaviour whereas organised criminals have a higher IQ and they are known to plan out their crime activity meticulously. Unlike the disorganised criminal they are sexually and socially competent. The steps involved in generating a criminal profile utilising this approach are reviewing all of the evidence that is available, classifying the crime scene as organized and disorganized, reconstruction of crime using the information gathered and formation of hypotheses.

However, this technique faces a lot of criticism as the organised and disorganised classification system is too simple when it comes to understanding complex humans and their actions. There could be cases where the criminal could tick both the boxes. Sometimes, the criminal could be disorganised and then become more organised with the development of their modus operandi. It is also an approach which believes that an offender would stay the same and not take into consideration that should change their modus operandi in order to avoid being caught.

**Bottom – Up Approach:** As the name suggests, this method would be analysing individual parts or components of a system or a problem and then combining it to understand the situation and come up with a complete solution. This is a British approach and it was founded by the psychologists David Canter and Paul Britton who worked with the police. Unlike the top-bottom approach this one is data-driven and it is based on analysing the connection between the details of the crime and the criminal. In this approach, the profiler starts with a detailed analysis of the crime scene and a lookout for patterns or clues that can help identify the criminal's personality and characteristics. For example, looking at details like the type of weapon used, the level of violence and victimology.

David Canter came up with the theory of interpersonal coherence which is a crucial concept of this approach. In this he argues that the criminal can be consistent in where he commits the crimes, in the way he commits the crimes and his behaviour in everyday life which would reflect their behaviour in the crime. Another key concept of Canter's theory is spatial consistency which states that the offenders operate in places they are familiar with and this grouped criminals into two categories: Marauders who commit their crimes close to where they reside and Commuters who commit crimes away from the place they reside. This then became the base for Geographical profiling also known as crime mapping.

This approach is often used in cases where there is little or no information about the criminal and the crime scene is the only source of evidence. Profiles created with the help of this approach have enabled the police to capture criminals like John Duffy who was called The Railway Rapist known for 24 sexual attacks and 3 murders of women near railway stations in North London in the 1950s.

Critics argued that profiling is not based on scientific methods and therefore, is subject to biases or inaccuracies. They also argue that profiling can lead to stigmatisation and unfair treatment of individuals who fit the profile especially those belonging to marginalized communities or having a history of mental illnesses.

Despite these criticisms, criminal profiling can be effective in preventing future crimes and protecting public safety and continues to be used by law enforcement agencies around the world. As our understanding of human behaviour and psychology continues to evolve, it is also likely for the methods of criminal profiling to develop and adapt to new methods. Despite some of the valid criticisms and concerns surrounding the practice, criminal profiling has been of great help in solving crime and bringing offenders to justice which makes it a valuable tool in the fight against crime.

## **2.5 Psychological Theories in Criminology**

Psychology is a discipline that plays a major role in the field of criminology and therefore it is said that the two fields are often intertwined. Psychology is the study of human behaviour and mental processes, while criminology is the scientific study of crime, criminals, and criminal behaviour. Psychology plays a crucial role in understanding criminal behaviour and the criminal mind. Psychologists are often called upon to assess the mental state of defendants in criminal cases, and their findings can be critical in determining the outcome of a case. Additionally, psychologists may conduct research on the psychological factors that contribute to criminal behaviour, such as personality traits, childhood experiences, and mental illness. Criminology, on the other hand, seeks to understand the broader societal factors that contribute to crime. Criminologists may study the relationship between crime and poverty, education, or social inequality. They may also examine the effectiveness of different criminal justice policies and interventions, such as incarceration or rehabilitation programs.

Despite their different foci, psychology and criminology have many areas of overlap. For example, both fields recognize the importance of understanding individual differences in behaviour. Psychologists may study how personality traits such as impulsivity or aggression contribute to criminal behaviour, while criminologists may study how social and economic factors interact with individual characteristics to produce criminal outcomes.

Another area of overlap is in the study of rehabilitation and reintegration. Psychologists may work with offenders to help them manage their behaviour and address underlying psychological issues that contribute to criminal behaviour. Criminologists may study the effectiveness of different rehabilitation programs or interventions, and may work with policymakers to develop evidence-based policies that reduce recidivism rates. When put together, they pave way for a larger and deeper perspective on the causes of crime and the ways in which individuals interact with the criminal justice system.

The relationship between psychology and criminology is a complex and dynamic one and both fields have a lot to offer in terms of understanding and addressing the complex problem of crime in society. By working together, psychologists and criminologists can develop more comprehensive and effective approaches to preventing and addressing criminal behaviour.

Psychological theories have played a significant role in the field of criminology since the early 20th century. Theories in this field explore the psychological factors that may contribute to criminal behaviour, including personality, cognition, emotions, and social influence. These theories are based on the belief that an individual's behaviour is largely determined by their psychological state.

1. Learning theories in criminology are focused on understanding how criminal behaviour is learned and developed through social interactions and environmental factors. These theories suggest that criminal behaviour is not a result of innate characteristics or biological factors, but rather a product of external influences that shape an individual's behaviour. The learning theories in criminology include differential association theory, social learning theory, and behaviourism.

**Differential Association Theory:** This theory was developed by Edwin Sutherland and it suggests that criminal behaviour is learned through interactions with others in their social environment. According to this theory, individuals learn criminal behaviour through their associations with peers who engage in such behaviour. Individuals are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour if they are exposed to positive attitudes towards crime, if they associate with people who commit crimes, and if they are rewarded for engaging in criminal behaviour.

**Social Learning Theory:** This theory, developed by Albert Bandura, expands on the ideas of differential association theory by emphasizing the role of cognitive processes in learning criminal behaviour. According to this theory, individuals learn criminal behaviour

by observing others and imitating their actions. The theory suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour if they perceive that the rewards of such behaviour outweigh the risks or if they are motivated by external factors such as money, power, or status.

**Behaviourism:** Behaviourism is a psychological theory that suggests that behaviour is shaped by environmental factors, including rewards and punishments. According to this theory, individuals are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour if they are rewarded for such behaviour, and less likely to engage in criminal behaviour if they are punished for it. This theory suggests that criminal behaviour can be reduced through the use of punishment and the reinforcement of positive behaviour.

Learning theories emphasize on the importance of social interactions and the influence of environmental factors on the development of criminal behaviour.

2. Personality trait theories in criminology suggest that certain personality traits may predispose individuals to criminal behaviour. These theories propose that criminal behaviour is not just the result of environmental or situational factors, but rather a combination of both environmental and individual factors, including personality traits.

The antisocial personality theory is a personality trait theory, which suggests that individuals with antisocial personality disorder are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour due to their lack of empathy and disregard for societal norms and rules. Individuals with antisocial personality disorder often engage in impulsive and risky behaviours like that of substance abuse and criminal activity.

The trait theory of crime suggests that certain personality traits, such as narcissism, impulsivity, insensitivity, can influence individuals towards criminal behaviour. According to this theory, individuals who lack self-control are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour because they are unable to control their impulses and make rational decisions.



Personality trait theories would also include the study of personality disorders the criminal may have. The term “personality disorder” refers to a long-lasting pattern of thoughts, emotions, and behaviours that significantly differs from what is considered normal in a person’s cultural background. This pattern is inflexible, persistent, and typically emerges in adolescence or early adulthood, causing distress and difficulties in functioning. Narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), schizoid/schizotypal personality disorder (STD), and borderline personality disorder (BPD) are some of the commonly known personality disorders. While personality disorder diagnosis may not be a primary focus of personality trait theories in criminology, some traits commonly associated with personality disorders may be relevant to understanding criminal behaviour.

Personality trait theories in criminology propose that certain personality traits can increase an individual’s likelihood of engaging in criminal behaviour. While some of these theories are controversial and not universally accepted, they have provided valuable insights into the underlying causes of criminal behaviour and have brought about the development of interventions and treatment programs for individuals at risk of engaging in criminal activity.

3. Psychopathy Theories are the theories that attempt to explain the origins and development of psychopathy.

The Genetic Theory: This theory states that psychopathy is primarily caused by genetic factors. Research has shown that there is a strong hereditary component to psychopathy, and that certain genes may predispose individuals to the disorder. However, the genetic theory cannot fully explain the complexity of psychopathy, and environmental factors also play a role.

The Neurobiological Theory: This theory focuses on the brain and its role in the development of psychopathy. Research has shown that individuals with psychopathy have different brain structures and functioning compared to non-psychopaths, including reduced

activity in the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for decision-making and impulse control. The neurobiological theory also suggests that childhood trauma and abuse may affect brain development and contribute to psychopathy.

**The Psychodynamic Theory:** This theory suggests that psychopathy arises from a combination of early childhood experiences and unconscious psychological conflicts. According to this theory, individuals with psychopathy may have experienced early trauma, neglect, or abuse, which led to the development of defence mechanisms such as dissociation and splitting. These defence mechanisms may have prevented the individual from developing empathy and other social skills, leading to the development of psychopathy.

**The Sociological Theory:** This theory suggests that psychopathy is the result of social and environmental factors such as poverty, social inequality, and lack of access to education and job opportunities. According to this theory, individuals with psychopathy may turn to criminal behaviour as a means of survival or to gain status and power within their social group.

Overall, these theories provide different perspectives on the development of psychopathy and the factors that contribute to its emergence. While there is no single theory that can fully explain the complexity of psychopathy, a comprehensive understanding of the disorder requires a multidisciplinary approach that takes into account biological, psychological, and social factors.

4. Development theories in criminology are a set of theories that attempt to explain the relationship between social and economic development and crime rates. These theories focus on the factors like poverty, inequality, and social disorganization that contribute to criminal behaviour

Each of the following theories emphasizes on different factors that contribute to criminal behaviour.

**Social Disorganization Theory:** Social disorganization theory proposes that crime is caused by social and economic disorganization in urban areas. This theory suggests that when communities experience economic hardship, unemployment, and other forms of social disorganization, crime rates increase. According to this theory, neighbourhoods with high levels of poverty, social isolation, and residential instability are more likely to experience high rates of crime.

**Strain Theory:** Strain theory argues that crime is a result of the strain caused by the gap between cultural goals and the means available to achieve those goals. According to this theory, people are more likely to turn to crime when they are unable to achieve their goals through legitimate means, such as education or employment. Strain theory suggests that individuals who experience social and economic strain, such as poverty or unemployment, are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour.

**Cultural Deviance Theory:** Cultural deviance theory proposes that crime is a result of the values and norms of certain subcultures within society. According to this theory, certain subcultures promote criminal behaviour as a means of achieving status or power within the group. Cultural deviance theory suggests that individuals who grow up in these subcultures are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour, as they have been socialized to view crime as an acceptable means of achieving their goals.

These development theories in criminology suggest that crime is a result of social and economic factors, including poverty, inequality, and social disorganization. These theories also emphasize the importance of addressing the root causes of crime, rather than simply punishing criminal behaviour.

In conclusion, psychological theories have played a significant role in the field of criminology by exploring the psychological factors that may contribute to criminal behaviour. These theories have helped to shape our understanding of criminal behaviour and have led to

the development of interventions that aim to address the psychological factors that contribute to criminal behaviour. While there is still much to be learned about the psychological factors that contribute to criminal behaviour, psychological theories provide a framework for exploring these factors and developing interventions to prevent criminal behaviour.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **A Peek into the Criminal Mind**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Individuals who violate the law and possess an attitude or personality that deviates from moral standards are criminals or offenders. It is important to understand that the reason they turn out to be criminals is because they have complex motivations and reasons behind their behaviour. There are multiple theories that explain the origin of the villain, that help us understand the growth of the criminal personality. Theories which state that the personality may stem from traumatic events, mental disorders, familial, economical and societal pressure, etc.

Understanding criminals is crucial for the society as it would raise awareness as well as help prevent future crimes. It would also help with understanding the best ways for recovery and deliverance of justice to the criminal and the victims. A key factor in getting to know criminals is to regard that like every individual, criminals also come from a variety of backgrounds and also experience different events in life. So, a 'one – size – fits – all' explanation would not exist when trying to analyse criminal behaviour. For instance, some would lose all sense of morality and turn to crime as a means of survival whereas some would be driven by different psychological or emotional factors.

Taking a peek into the criminal mind and understanding their complexities as an individual with the help of a variety of methods can help the society gain a deeper comprehension about how criminals are created in society along with increasing the effectiveness the rehabilitation of offenders and also the strategies utilised to prevent crime, ultimately benefitting the society as a whole.

### 3.2 An Introduction to the Novels

Analysis of crime fiction would help individuals delve deeper into understanding then criminal personality. The following psychological thrillers would aid in identifying the process of creating crime fiction characters as well as psychological disorders that are relevant in criminals till present day.

1. Dorothy B. Hughes – *In a Lonely Place* (1947)

Dorothy Belle Hughes (1904 – 1993), an American novelist is known as one of the finest female noir novelists. She was born in Kansas City, Missouri and spent most of her life in New Mexico. She is famous for her hard-boiled writing style and three of her books were successfully adapted into films: *The Fallen Sparrow* (1943), *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947) and *In a Lonely Place* (1950).

*In a Lonely Place* is a suspenseful and psychological thriller published in the year 1947. The story is set in a post-World War II Los Angeles and revolves around the psyche of the main character Dickson Steele, also known as Dix in the novel. He is a war veteran and the author shows his struggles trying to adjust in a normal life after being at war.

The novel opens with Dix walking the lonely and dark streets of L.A when he spots a young woman and begins to follow her with killer-like intentions. The novel then cuts to Dix meeting his friend, a detective in the L.A police department – Brub Nicholai who was currently working on a case of the strangler preying on young women that had terrified the city.

Dix Steele appears to be attempting to write a novel and so, he convinces his uncle to help him financially for a year, he also lived in an apartment that originally belonged to a wealthy friend of his – Mel Terriss. Dix eventually finds his interest in a fiery redhead, Laurel grey who fuels his passion and obsession.

The plot progresses with Dix's mental instability being apparent along with the increase in sudden violent outbursts and disturbing thoughts. The story builds to a climax when Laurel appears to be missing and this pushes Dix into a state of paranoia and rage and then, Sylvia, Brub's wife lures him into a trap which follows by Dix's attempt to strangle her. Thus, exposing the fact that Dix was the psycho strangler who, driven by depression and rage had murdered innocent women and also his wealthy friend Mel Terriss. The novel also delves into the past of Dix Steele, including his obsessive love for a woman named Brucie in London who was revealed to be killed by him and this directed his lonely journey as a criminal in L.A.

## 2. Patricia Highsmith – *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955)

Patricia Highsmith (1921 – 1995) was an American novelist and was known for her famous psychological thrillers, *Strangers on a Train* (1950) which was later adapted into a film by Alfred Hitchcock in the year 1951 and *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1955) which was adapted into a film by Anthony Minghella in 1999. She was born in Fort Worth, Texas and later moved with her parents to New York. She is known for her works that often explore the dark aspects of human nature and the psychological complexities of criminals. Highsmith has the ability to create suspenseful and unsettling plots, supported by complex and morally ambiguous characters.

Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* was published in the year 1955 and it portrays the life and psyche of Tom Ripley, a gifted and talented individual whose greed gets the best of him and turns him into a cold-blooded murderer. The novel starts off with Herbert Greenleaf, Dickie Greenleaf's father approaching Tom at a bar for some help in convincing his son to come home from Europe in order to help him out with the family business. Tom

who had a poor childhood and was envious of people who had wealthy lifestyles accepts Herbert's offer and sets out for Europe in search of Dickie.

On reaching Mongibello, Tom plans a casual meet-up with Dickie Greenleaf and his girlfriend Marge Sherwood. Dickie eventually confesses the reason he had come to Mongibello and Dickie, who was amused accepts him as a friend.

As the story progresses, Tom's envy grows into obsession and in a fit of rage he murders Dickie Greenleaf in order to be able to escape from his life and uses his impersonations to live a luxurious and care-free life like that of Dickie.

The police then, get to know about the disappearance of Dickie. Paranoia grows inside Tom and he commits another murder to get away from being exposed. Towards the end of the novel, everything seems to turn out in the favour of Tom - he inherits Dickie's wealth as per his own orchestration and does not end up getting caught or punished for his crimes. It is a story of envy, obsession and crime and it raises important questions about identity and lengths one would go to, to change or protect it.

### 3. Thomas Harris – *Red Dragon* (1981)

American writer Thomas Harris, was born in the year 1940. He was brought up in Rich, Mississippi and he studied at Bailer University of Texas as an English major. He worked as a crime reporter and also wrote for the magazines. These were the experiences that helped his career as a novelist. His best-known thrillers that brought him recognition were: *Red Dragon* (1981), *Silence of the Lambs* (1988), *Hannibal* (1999) and *Hannibal Rising* (2006).

*Red Dragon* was published in the year 1981 and it is a psychological thriller that delves into the psychology of both the criminal's and the investigator's mind. Thomas Harris creates complex characters each fighting or engulfing their demons. The building tension as



the events unfold make it interesting as well as insightful to read. The novel is set in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the United States and is told through multiple perspectives, including Graham's, the criminals - Francis Dolarhyde's and Dr. Hannibal Lecter's.

The novel opens with an introduction to Will Graham, the FBI profiler who is tasked with capturing the criminal on the loose 'The Tooth Fairy'. In the year 1970, Will Graham's interaction with serial killer, mastermind and cannibal, Dr. Hannibal Lecter, he had experienced disturbance and imbalance in his life. Three years later, he is asked to join the force again to help catch the criminal who is known to stalk and murder entire families only under a full moon sky. The reason his companion Jack Crawford pleaded Will Graham to be on the case was for his abilities to empathize with criminals as well as his 'Eidetic Memory' (also known as photographic memory) as stated by Dr. Alan Bloom in the novel which provides great help in investigation and prediction. At a later stage of the crime branch investigation, they gain understanding that the criminal has been acting on the commands of a 'Dragon' – a personality that he created in his mind and all his acts were executed in order to pave the way for 'His Becoming.' Details about the past, physique and psychology and other information about the criminal is spoken of in detail in the novel - 'Francis Dolarhyde' and what made him turn into a sadistic monster.

Another important event that takes place is when Will Graham investigates the murders of the Leeds and the Jacobi families but doesn't seem to get close to capturing the criminal so he seeks help from his former rival, the criminal mastermind Hannibal Lecter and learns about the criminal. His encounter with Hannibal left him disturbed as the vicious Dr. Hannibal kept making comments about how Graham thinks the way he does only because he is an offender himself.

Meanwhile the criminal starts to develop a love interest for his co-worker Reba McClane but is unable to resist the madness and his violent urges and eventually gives in to evil.

As Will Graham and his partner Crawford close in on the case, they discover that the Tooth Fairy works in a film manufacturing company hence, he knew the layout of the houses which facilitated in precisely planned murders.

On discovering the criminal's identity, Dolarhyde faked his death and that was going to be the end of the case but as Will started to get comfortable with his family, Dolarhyde came back and this resulted in a brawl between Will and Dolarhyde. The fight ended as Molly, Will's wife shot Dolarhyde dead thus, ending the terror of the Tooth Fairy.

The novel ends with Graham receiving a letter that Lecter wrote to him in which he wished him well and hopes that he has not been terribly disfigured from the fight with the villain Dolarhyde. As Graham lay awake in bed, he remembers visiting a Civil War battle site – Shiloh shortly after capturing a previous serial killer, Hobbs. During the visit, he contemplated whether nature could be haunted by the events that had occurred there, like at Shiloh. Graham concludes that nature remains indifferent to such traumatic events, but human beings can be haunted by them indefinitely.

#### 4. Alex Michaelides - *The Silent Patient* (2019)

Alex Michaelides was born in Cyprus in the year 1977. He majored in English at Cambridge University. He is known for the use of psychological themes in his writings and his work has been compared to works of authors like Gillian Flynn. His debut novel *The Silent Patient* was published in the year 2019 and has won several awards for its compelling elements of suspense and thriller.

The novel follows Alicia Berenson, a famous painter who has been convicted of murdering her husband, Gabriel and it begins with Alicia being found with Gabriel's dead

body, and subsequently refusing to speak another word. The novel exhibits elements of psychological thriller and a little bit of whodunnit while more stress is placed on character development and suspense. It makes you try to understand the reasons why the woman Alicia did what she did even though we are well informed about their happy married life. After being caught and placed in the mental ward at The Grove, amongst criminals who are deemed as harmful to themselves and others, she still remains silent but is prone to occasional outbursts of violence. The narrator is Theo Faber, a psychotherapist and he takes up a job at that ward specifically because he believes he can find out about the issue with Alicia. Soon, we find out that he is obsessed with her story to an extent that does not seem healthy and appropriate. The interest of Theo at first seems to be human empathy stemming from his therapist nature, the desire to understand why she was so troubled and what pushed her to commit the crime making the first half of the book an interesting exploration of the therapist-patient relationship. Theo, being a patient of therapy himself, explains his philosophy of therapy. He describes it as when a patient comes to a therapist, they have trouble processing their emotions so the therapist holds it and feels it for them. The second part of the book informs the readers about the therapy sessions of Theo and Alicia thus, providing insights on Alicia's past – her trauma that developed mainly because of her parents' neglect which led to her feelings of resentment towards her family. The novel ends in a twist about the narrator's marital relationship which paralleled Alicia's and the crime being the result of Gabriel's infidelity and betrayal of his wife. The story's narrative is what makes the twist interesting as it is written about two different timelines, six years apart, interwoven and told as one narrative.

### **3.3 Viewing the Author as an Artist**

It is important to understand that the creation of a gripping and sensational psychological thriller requires the use of many tools like literary devices, themes, characters,

etc by the author. Keeping in mind that the author is in control of the management of these tools in order to make the elements of the story come alive, the author can be referred to as the artist of the select crime story.

The literary devices used by Dorothy B. Hughes are as follows:

**Third Person Narration** - Third-person narration involves a narrator who is not a part of the story's events and describes the actions of the characters using their names or third-person pronouns like he, she, or they. This type of narration helps gain an outsider view about the psyche of the central character, Dix as well as, facilitates easier switches between different perspectives. This kind of narration also provides deep insights on the emotions, motivations and psychological intensity of the characters.

For instance, the lines, "The girl was safe; he could feel the relaxation in her footsteps. Anger beat him like a drum." (Hughes 03) portrays the frustrations of Dix Steele as he lets a potential victim get away to safety.

**Foreshadowing** - Writers employ foreshadowing as a literary tool to suggest or allude to something that will happen later in a story. When used effectively, foreshadowing can generate suspense and tension, creating emotional anticipation of character actions or plot developments. As a result, it can enhance a reader's experience of a literary work, deepen its significance, and facilitate connections with other literary works and themes.

"Brub said, 'She was murdered.' He could show shock because he was shocked. He had never expected to hear it said. It was so long ago." (Hughes 103)

These lines show that the reactions of Dix are unusual and are hinting towards the fact that he is not shocked because he heard about his lovers' death for the first time but because he himself was the cold-blooded killer.

Symbolism – Symbolism in literature involves the incorporation of symbols within a literary work. These symbols are elements that represent or indicate something beyond their literal meaning. They can take various forms, such as words, objects, actions, characters, or concepts, and are used to embody and evoke a range of additional meanings and significance.

“Fog stalked silently past the windows.” (Hughes 03)

Throughout the novel references are made to the fog being quiet and alone and this adds a tinge of darkness and loneliness in the story. Fog bears symbolism to Dix’s lonely and stalker characteristics.

Apart from these literary devices, some key themes that stand out are:

Isolation and Loneliness – This theme is central to “In a Lonely Place” and is woven throughout the novel in various ways. “Then he was alone, feeling his way off the porch and down the path into the darkness and the moist opaque fog.” (Hughes 12)

“He was there for a long time. Lost in a world of swirling fog and crashing wave, a world empty of all but these things and his grief and the keening of the fog horn far at sea. Lost in a lonely place.” (Hughes 143)

These suggest Dix Steele’s loneliness as he is emotionally and psychologically disconnected from others, unable to form meaningful relationships or sustain human connections. He is a former World War II fighter pilot who struggles to re-adjust to civilian life as his experiences in the war have left him with deep emotional scars. Dix’s isolation and loneliness are fuelled by his obsession with violence, crime, and murder which further creates a sense of moral decay. His worldview is what led him down a destructive path and ultimately to his violent actions.

The Dark Side of the American Dream – The novel portrays the scenario of post-World War II Los Angeles and it is noticed that beneath the attractive and pleasing sight of prosperity and happiness blooming, the sad and harsh realities of humans are hidden. Dix did

not want to be an ordinary person, he wanted to be an expensive one – “If it could have been right, if he could have been one of the fellows he saw around town, driving a fast car, careless about expensive clothes and money and girls, club fellow, he’d have grabbed it.” (Hughes, 94) His inability to be rich and content in life drove Dix Steele to lose his morality and commit several murders to relieve himself of his depression and rage.

**Toxic Masculinity** – This theme is dominant throughout the novel. In the post-world war setting men were expected to be tough, aggressive, and dominant. Dix Steele embodies this toxic masculinity with his macho posturing, violent outbursts, and objectification of women. His hatred towards women is seen in his confrontation he has with Sylvia wherein he goes to the extent of threatening to kill her.

“‘I’m going to kill you.’ He leaped as he spoke. He didn’t telegraph the movement and he was on her, his hands on her throat before she knew.” (Hughes 184)

**Feminism** – Sylvia Nicholai and Laurel Gray are the two figures that are pioneers of feminism in the novel. “From the beginning I knew there was something wrong with you. From the first night you walked into our living room and looked at me. I knew there was something wrong. Something terribly wrong.” (Hughes 184) This being said by Sylvia highlights her intuition about Dix’s criminal personality which she picked up just by how he looked at her the first time. Laurel Gray grasped the opportunity the minute she received it to escape Dix’s killer hands without him suspecting what she was really on to.

These strong women read Dix way before the male characters did and had the courage to confront the criminal and plot against him which led to the successful capture of Dix Steele.

Patricia Highsmith in her novel employs a variety of literary devices to create a sense of tension and suspense, as well as to deepen the characterization of her protagonist.

One of the most prominent literary devices used in the novel is foreshadowing. Highsmith uses this device to hint at events that will occur later in the story, creating a sense of anticipation and tension in the reader. For example, in chapter nine of the novel, Ripley demonstrates his talents to Dickie and Marge. He says, “No matter how drunk I get, I can always tell when a waiter’s cheating me on a bill. I can forge a signature, fly a helicopter, handle dice, impersonate practically anybody, cook--and do a one-man show in a nightclub in case the regular entertainer’s sick.” This statement foreshadows Ripley’s ability to adapt to different situations and personas, a skill that becomes crucial to his success later in the story.

Another literary device used in *The Talented Mr. Ripley* is imagery. Highsmith employs vivid and detailed descriptions to create a sense of atmosphere as well emphasize the psychological states of her characters. For example, when Ripley arrives at Paris, Highsmith describes the aesthetics of the place as “Paris was no more than a glimpse out of a railroad station window of a lighted café front, complete with rain-streaked awning, sidewalk tables and boxes of hedge, like a tourist poster illustration.” (Hughes, 35) This imagery not only enhances the setting of the story but also adds to the aspect of creativity and realism aspect.

Highsmith also makes use of symbolism in the novel, particularly in relation to the theme of identity. For instance:

The only things, the only revealing things, he kept with him were Dickie’s rings, which he put into the bottom of an ugly little brown leather box belonging to Thomas Ripley, that he had somehow kept with him for years everywhere he travelled or moved to, and which was otherwise filled with his own interesting collection of cuff-links, collar pins, odd buttons, a couple of fountain-pen points, and a spool of white thread with a needle stuck in it.

(Highsmith 170)

This show that the box symbolises Tom's true self and his desire to escape from his own identity. In order to survive and live someone else's lavish lifestyle that he had coveted, he hides away the things that are attached to his own personality and his true self in the ugly brown leather box.

Finally, Highsmith uses irony to underscore the moral ambiguity of the story. Irony is employed in many different ways throughout the novel, from the ironic contrast between Ripley's polite exterior and his ruthless interior to the ironic reversal of roles between the protagonist and his victims. For example, when Ripley murders Dickie Greenleaf, the man who had befriended him and given him a taste of luxury, it is a shocking and ironic twist that highlights the amoral nature of the protagonist.

*The Talented Mr. Ripley* is a novel that employs a range of literary devices to create a sense of tension, atmosphere, and psychological depth. Through the use of foreshadowing, imagery, symbolism, and irony, Patricia Highsmith creates a complex and morally ambiguous world that challenges the reader's assumptions about identity, morality, and the nature of evil.

Some significant themes in the novel are as follows: One of the most prominent themes is the theme of identity. Throughout the novel, the protagonist, Tom Ripley, struggles with his own sense of self and his desire to be someone else. He is a master of impersonation, able to mimic the speech, mannerisms, and even the handwriting of other people. However, his ability to transform himself into different identities comes at a great cost, as he must constantly suppress his own true self in order to maintain his façade. This theme of identity raises questions about the nature of the self and the extent to which our identities are shaped by external forces.

Another significant theme in the novel is the theme of morality. Ripley is a morally ambiguous character, capable of committing acts of fraud and murder without remorse.



However, his actions are not entirely without justification. He is motivated by a desire for wealth, status, and a sense of belonging, all of which he feels are out of reach because of his own identity. This raises questions about the nature of morality and whether it is absolute or relative. Is it possible to justify immoral actions if they are done for a greater good or out of a sense of necessity?

A related theme in the novel is the theme of social class. Ripley is acutely aware of the differences in social class between himself and the wealthy friends he encounters in Italy. He longs to be a part of their world, and his impersonations allow him to gain access to their privileged lifestyles. However, his success in this regard is always tenuous, as his true identity threatens to be revealed at any moment. This theme raises questions about the role of social class in shaping our identities and determining our opportunities in life.

Another theme in the novel is the theme of isolation. Ripley is a deeply isolated character, unable to form meaningful relationships with others. His impersonations allow him to form temporary connections with people, but these connections are always based on deception and are ultimately hollow. This theme raises questions about the nature of human connection and the extent to which our identities are shaped by our relationships with others.

Finally, the novel explores the theme of power and control. Ripley is a character who craves power and control over his own life and the lives of others. His ability to transform himself into different identities gives him a sense of control over his own destiny, as well as allows him to manipulate and control the people around him. This theme raises questions about the nature of power and whether it is possible to wield it without becoming corrupted.

Thus, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* is a novel that explores a variety of themes related to identity, morality, social class, isolation, and power. Through the character of Tom Ripley, Patricia Highsmith raises profound questions about the nature of the self and the extent to

which our identities are shaped by external forces. The novel is a powerful exploration of the human condition and the complex relationships between identity, morality, and power.

The novel *Red Dragon* keeps readers on edge with its suspenseful plot, intricate characterization, and use of various literary devices. Harris' skilful use of these devices, including symbolism, foreshadowing, imagery, and irony, add depth and complexity to the story, heightening the tension and creating a truly unforgettable reading experience.

Symbolism is one of the most prominent literary devices used and one example of this is the recurring motif of the dragon. "It was William Blake's *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun*. The picture had stunned him the first time he saw it. Never before had he seen anything that approached his graphic thought." (Harris 87) It was this very art that ignited the criminal flame in the killer and it dictated his every move for he thought that becoming this creature would make him a person that was invincible and feared by all.

The dragon thus, symbolizes the killer, Francis Dolarhyde, who sees himself as a powerful and terrifying creature, much like the mythical beast. Harris uses this symbol to heighten the tension and create a sense of danger throughout the novel. The dragon can also be seen as a symbol of his grandmother who mentally abused him when he was a little boy. There are many instances that show the similarities in the voice of the dragon that he hears and the terrifying words his grandmother said to him. "I've never seen a child as disgusting and dirty as you. Get *out*, get out of this bed" (Harris 240) These are the words his grandmother said to him while she threatened to cut off his intimates as punishment for his wrong doings which replays in his mind as the dragon's voice later on.

Another example of symbolism in "Red Dragon" is the use of the colour red. The title of the novel itself is symbolic, as the colour red represents danger, violence, and bloodshed. The colour red also appears throughout the book in various forms, including the killer's nickname - the Red Dragon, and the red eyes of the William Blake painting that Dolarhyde

obsesses over, Dolarhyde's red goggles. This use of symbolism adds an ominous atmosphere to the story, signalling to the reader that something terrible is about to happen.

Foreshadowing is another literary device that Harris uses to great effect. One example of this is the scene where FBI profiler Will Graham visits the Leeds family crime scene. In this scene, Graham has a flash of insight and realizes that the killer is not a stranger but someone who knew the family. This realization sets the stage for the revelation later in the novel that Dolarhyde is, in fact, connected to the family through his job. This use of foreshadowing builds suspense and anticipation, keeping the reader engaged and guessing as to what will happen next.

Imagery is another powerful literary device used in this novel wherein Harris employs vivid descriptions to create a sense of place and atmosphere that is both haunting and unsettling. For example, in the scene where Graham visits the Leeds family crime scene, Harris describes the grisly details of the murder in such vivid detail that it becomes almost unbearable for the reader. The investigation of the crime scene provided the readers with the following gory information: "Here was a row of three bloodstains slanting up and around a corner of the bedroom wall. Here were three faint stains on the carpet beneath them. The wall above the headboard on Charles' Leeds side of the bed was bloodstained and there were swipes along the baseboards." (Harris 17) This use of imagery creates a visceral reaction in the reader, making the horror of the crime all the more real.

The use of Irony is also evident and one example of this is the scene where Dolarhyde attempts to murder his blind girlfriend, Reba McClane. In this scene, Dolarhyde, who sees himself as a powerful and terrifying dragon, is completely undone by a blind woman who is unable to see him for who he really is. This use of irony underscores the psychological complexity of the novel, showing that even the most powerful and terrifying characters are ultimately vulnerable to their own weaknesses.

The themes explored in this novel add depth and complexity to the story. These themes include identity, obsession, trauma, and the nature of evil.

Identity is a central theme. The novel explores the way that our sense of self is shaped by our experiences and the people around us. This is exemplified in the character of Francis Dolarhyde, the novel's antagonist, who struggles with his identity as a monster. Dolarhyde's trauma and childhood experiences have led him to develop a distorted sense of self, and he sees himself as a dragon, a powerful and terrifying creature. Harris uses Dolarhyde's struggle with identity to explore the question of what makes us who we are, and how we construct our sense of self.

Obsession is another major theme and the novel explores the way that obsession can drive us to do terrible things, as exemplified by Dolarhyde's obsession with the William Blake painting *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed in Sun*. Dolarhyde's obsession with the painting leads him to commit horrific acts of violence, as he believes that he must become the dragon in order to fulfil his destiny. Harris uses Dolarhyde's obsession to explore the power of obsession and the way that it can warp our perceptions of reality.

Trauma is also a major theme in the novel and it throws light on the way that traumatic experiences can shape our lives and our sense of self. This is also demonstrated through the character of Will Graham, the FBI profiler who was tasked with catching Dolarhyde. Graham is haunted by his past experiences, particularly his encounter with the cannibalistic serial killer Hannibal Lecter. Harris uses Graham's trauma to explore the psychological toll of violent crime and the way that trauma can impact our ability to function.

Finally, through his novel, Thomas Harris explores the nature of evil. The novel grapples with the question of why some people are capable of committing unspeakable acts of violence. Harris suggests that evil is not a fixed or inherent quality, but rather a product of a person's experiences and choices. This is illustrated in the character of Dolarhyde, who has

been shaped by a traumatic childhood and a lifetime of isolation and loneliness. Harris suggests that while Dolarhyde's actions are horrific, they are not incomprehensible, and that evil is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon.

The novel *The Silent Patient* by Alex Michaelides employs several literary devices to enhance its suspenseful and gripping narrative, including symbolism, foreshadowing, and dramatic irony.

Symbolism is a significant literary device used in the novel to convey deeper meanings and emotions. For instance, the title of the novel *The Silent Patient*, is symbolic of the main character, Alicia Berenson, who becomes mute after she is charged with murdering her husband. Alicia's silence is symbolic of her trauma, her inability to communicate her feelings and thoughts. Similarly, the painting that Alicia creates, *Alcestris*, is a symbolic representation of her life. In Greek mythology, Alcestris sacrifices herself to save her husband, Admetus. In Alicia's case, this symbolises her immense love for her husband – Gabriel.

Foreshadowing is another literary device used in *The Silent Patient*. The author employs several techniques to hint at future events and create suspense. For example, in the first chapter, the narrator Theo Faber, mentions that he has always been fascinated by the case of Alicia Berenson.

“And something about Alicia's story resonated with me personally – I felt profound empathy right from the start.” (Michaelides 15) This foreshadows his obsession with Alicia and his determination to unravel the mystery behind her silence. Similarly, throughout the novel, there are several hints and clues that suggest that there is more to Alicia's story than what is revealed in the beginning. These hints keep the reader engaged and eager to find out the truth.

Dramatic irony is another device that is used in the novel. The reader is aware of things that the characters in the story are not, which creates tension and suspense. For

example, as the reader learns more about Alicia's life, it becomes clear that she faced resentment and betrayal from the people most dear to her like her parents and her husband. However, the other characters in the story, including the police and the therapist, are unaware of this fact. Similarly, when Theo is treating Alicia, he is unaware that she knows he has a personal connection to her case, and that he has his own reasons for wanting to help her. This dramatic irony adds depth to the narrative and keeps the reader engaged. The use of these devices enhances the reader's experience by creating tension, adding depth to the characters, and hinting at the truth behind the mystery.

This psychological thriller delves into themes of trauma, mental illness, love, and obsession. The novel explores these themes through the perspective of the two main characters, Alicia Berenson, the patient and Theo Faber, a psychotherapist determined to uncover the truth behind Alicia's silence.

One of the primary themes of the novel is trauma. Alicia is traumatised by the events that led to her husband's murder and her subsequent silence. She is unable to communicate her emotions and is trapped in a state of perpetual shock. As the story unfolds, we learn that Alicia has a history of trauma, including the death of her parents when she was young and certain experiences with her husband. When Theo investigates Alicia's history, he finds out through her cousin Paul about the incident that killed Alicia inside. It happened right after her mother tried to kill herself and her daughter by crashing the car into a wall. Paul explains to Theo: "Vernon was going on about how much he loved Eva – how he couldn't live without her. "My girl," he kept saying, "my poor girl, my Eva... Why did she have to die? Why did it have to be her? *Why didn't Alicia die instead?*"" (Michaelides 271)

On hearing this, the little child Alicia who did not even know how to cope with her mother's death was shattered and ever since her trauma has left her feeling isolated, and she finds solace in her art, which becomes a form of therapy for her.

Mental illness is another significant theme in *The Silent Patient*. “I thought of my mother. Was she crazy? Is that why she did it? Why she strapped me into the passenger seat of her yellow Mini, and sped us towards that red brick wall?” (Michaelides 67) As recorded in Alicia’s diary, it seemed as though her mother was a patient of mental illness which eventually drives her in to thinking that her mother’s madness was her in blood. Alicia’s silence is also initially perceived as a symptom of her mental illness, and she is placed in a mental institution. However, as the story progresses, it becomes clear that her silence is a coping mechanism for the trauma she has experienced. Theo Faber, the psychotherapist, also struggles with his own mental health issues, including anxiety, obsession and depression. His experiences allow him to empathize with Alicia’s struggles and help her to overcome her silence.

Love is also a central theme in the novel. Alicia and her husband have been initially portrayed in an idealistic, romantic relationship. It has been repeatedly noticed how she strongly desires for his love and this could be because of the rejection she had faced from her family. However, as the story progresses, we learn about his infidelity which ultimately leads to his death.

Obsession is another prominent theme in *The Silent Patient*. Theo’s obsession with Alicia’s case is seen right from the start. He becomes increasingly erratic and is willing to take extreme measures to uncover the truth. His obsession also leads him to confront his own past traumas and mental health issues and as the story develops it is revealed that he is the obsessive stalker of the man his wife, Kathy was involved in an extra – marital affair with. Theo’s obsession of Kathy does not allow him to confront her about the affair and in the end, decides to live with it.

Although the literary devices and the themes are the same across the four selected texts, they are capable of enhancing different situations while adding to the element of suspense and thriller in the genre of psychological thriller.

### **3.4 Analysing the Criminal Character**

The criminal characters in each of the novels have been formed by the efforts of the authors through the incorporation of criminological theories with literature. Criminological theories provide a framework for understanding the motivations and behaviour of criminals, as well as the social and environmental factors that contribute to criminal behaviour. Thus, creating logical characters who exhibit complex psychology that can only be understood with the help of in-depth analysis and reference to psychological and other theories in crime fiction.

The first novel explores the mind of Dix Steele, a sociopathic killer who preys on women in post-World War II Los Angeles. While there are several criminological theories that could be applied to the novel, two of the most relevant are:

Social Learning Theory: As it is known that this theory suggests that people learn to commit crime by observing and imitating others around them it can be used as a lens to analyse the main character, Dix Steele – his background as someone who lived a life in poverty and a former soldier who has been exposed to violence and brutality during the war. After the war was over, he kept searching for something that would help him achieve the same exhilaration and freedom that came with flying war crafts. “It wasn’t often he could capture any part of that feeling of power and exhilaration and freedom that came with lonesomeness in the sky.” (Hughes 01) This particular quote demonstrates his need for power and the rush that came from flying wild.

Being a part of the Air Corps were his best years, he describes, “The war years were the first happy years he had ever known. You didn’t have to kowtow to the stinking rich, you



were all equal in pay; and before long you were the rich guy. Because you didn't give a damn and you were the best God-damned pilot in the company with promotions coming in fast.” (Hughes 96) Utilising the theory to analyse shows that, his constant longing for the status and power of having the whole world entitled to him corrupted his mind and thus, pushed him towards trying to achieve all of that through crime.

All these experiences as well as his exposure to crime as a war veteran may have contributed to his violent tendencies and his belief that he is entitled to do whatever he wants, including murdering women in order to experience a certain 'high' in life.

Antisocial personality theory: This theory suggests that some individuals have a personality disorder characterized by a lack of empathy and remorse, which makes them more likely to engage in criminal behaviour. Dix Steele's behaviour in the novel is consistent with this trait in his lack of remorse, impulsivity, and a disregard for the safety of others, especially women. For instance, his thought process before committing a murder - “He smiled. She didn't know that behind that smile lay his hatred of Laurel, hatred of Brub and Sylvia, of Mel Terriss, of old Fergus Steele, of everyone in the living world, of everyone but Brucie. And Brucie was dead.” (Hughes 143) suggests his lack of empathy and his selfishness in the act of taking innocent lives as a way to let out his anguish and frustration.

The second novel follows the life of Tom Ripley, a con artist and serial killer, who manipulates his way through life to fulfil his desires. The theories of criminology that can be explored in analysing the creation of Tom Ripley the protagonist, are:

Trait theory – As this theory suggests that certain traits of an individual are what influences them to commit the crime. In Ripley's case, his obsession with himself proves that he is narcissistic and cares only about his needs and fulfilling his wants. This is evident when he begins thinking about his future as Mr. Greenleaf opened a door of opportunity for him.

He contemplates of how the passengers travelling with him might have been thinking of him; “He must be really serious, isn’t he, and he can’t be more than twenty-three. He must have something really important on his mind.” (Highsmith 34) This quality of narcissism is what fuels his drive to do whatever he wants to for the sake of personal gain even if it means killing his friend and stealing his identity.

Antisocial personality theory: “His mood was tranquil and benevolent, but not at all sociable. He wanted his time thinking and he did not care to meet any of the people on the ship, not any of them, though when he encountered the people with whom he sat at his table, he greeted them pleasantly and smiled.” (Highsmith 28) This statement suggests Tom’s disconnection from the society and it shows how, without genuine human connections and valuable relationships, he is unable to empathize thus, turning him into a cold-blooded killer for the sake of his own pleasures.

Strain Theory: This theory helps analyse Tom’s motives behind stealing the cash deposit letters, murdering Dickie Greenleaf and his friend Freddie and taking on the identity of his friend Dickie. He was always envious of the people living lavishly especially Dickie as he never had the privilege to do so. Life had always been tough on him as he was subject to poverty, troublesome job experiences and sometimes no jobs at all and inability to pursue the profession he always dreamed of – an actor.

Why should Dickie want to come back to subways and taxis and starched collars and a nine-to-five job? Or even a chauffeured car and vacations in Florida and Maine? It wasn’t as much fun as sailing a boat in old clothes and being answerable to nobody for the way he spent his time, and having his own house with a good-natured maid who probably took care of everything for him. And money besides, to take trips if he wanted to. Tom envied him with a heartbreaking surge of envy and self-pity. (Highsmith 45)

Therefore, it can be said that his actions and behaviours are driven by his desire for money and material possessions, which he uses to compensate for his lack of social connections and to gain satisfaction in life.

The third novel explores the mind of a troubled serial killer known as “The Tooth Fairy,” who is motivated by various psychological issues. These can be understood with the help of the following criminological theories:

**Social Learning Theory:** In the novel, we learn that Francis Dolarhyde, the main character, grew up in an abusive environment, from the children in the orphanage, his grandmother, Queen mother and his step brother and step sister and learned violent behaviour from these different experiences. An instance that would explain the theory is when young Francis observes his grandmother’s helper – Queen Mother Bailey butcher chickens, he acquires the urge to slaughter one himself and does so with a hatchet. We learn that this was done by him in order to protect his grandmother for he loved her.

Another incident that highlights the theory is that he learnt some acts from the bullying and abuse he faced from his step siblings: “Ned grabbed Francis by the ears and held him close to the mirror over the dressing table. ‘That’s why he’s sick!’ Slam.” (Highsmith 256) He later models his behaviour on William Blake’s “The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed in Sun,” which he sees as a guide to becoming a powerful killer.

**Psychodynamic theory:** Francis Dolarhyde was born with a deformity. “He was born with bilateral fissures in his upper lip and in his hard and soft palates. The centre section of his mouth was anchored and protruding. His nose was flat.” (Harris 230) This made Marian, his mother resent and abandon him at the hospital. The infant was at the Springfield Foundling Home for a year and a half and then to Morgan Lee Memorial Orphanage where he faced a lot of aggression from the other orphans. Later, he was taken in by his grandmother who was not financially well-off. Although his grandmother provided for him

with whatever she could, he never experienced motherly love. His grandmother would often threaten him and physically abuse him as punishment for his mistakes. This created a deep psychological wound that he grew up with. Despite the abuse he faced from his grandmother, he still felt devoted and attached to her as it shows in his continuous efforts to please her. The psychodynamic theory suggests that the lack of love from his mother, his toxic attachment towards his grandmother and him being subject to bullying because of the way he looked may have contributed to his violent behaviour and his fixation on finding a “family” through his victims. There are multiple instances which show that Francis is still a victim of the trauma and abuse he faced when he was young – like every time the dragon seemed to speak to him, it was almost like his mind kept replaying the events and harsh words of abuse he received when he was young.

This theory also proposes that unconscious psychological processes drive behaviour. Dolarhyde has deep-rooted insecurities and a desire for power and control and his obsession with Blake’s painting and the pathway to ‘His Becoming’ could be his own manifestation of these desires.

Antisocial Personality Trait: The experiences of Francis as discussed earlier resulted in him growing up to be socially distant and unable to form or maintain a relationship with another human being. No matter how hard he tried, he always seemed compelled by a force to give in to the dragon’s voice inside his head. The incident that highlights this is when he lures Reba McClane to his house to kill her, he tries to resist the urge but eventually the voice of the dragon in his head gets louder and he gives in. Thus, in his attempt to adapt the personality of the great Red Dragon, he loses all human qualities like empathy, kindness and resorts to committing brutal crimes without any sense of morality.

The *Red Dragon* incorporates several psychological theories and themes to provide insight into the motivations and behaviour of the psychologically disturbed serial killer -

Francis Dolarhyde. It suggests that childhood experiences, attachment patterns, unconscious desires, and distorted beliefs can all contribute to violent behaviour.

The fourth analysis studies the character of Alicia Berenson from the psychological thriller *The Silent Patient*. It primarily focuses on the story of a murder, as well as touches upon some criminological theories. Here's a brief overview of the theory that is the most relevant in the novel.

Psychodynamic theory – The author has focused very largely upon the fact that most villain's origin begins from a traumatic event in their younger years which often pushes them to the brink of insanity. "Imagine it – hearing your father, the very person you depend upon for your survival, wishing you dead. How terrifying that must be for a child, how traumatising – how your sense of self would implode; and the pain would be too great, too huge to feel, so you'd swallow it, repress it, bury it." (Michaelides 272) Alicia Berenson was subject to rejection from her very own parents as explained in the earlier subtopic. The author helps us understand through the narrator about the emotional effects of psychological wounds on children and how they manifest themselves later in adults.

"But one day, all the hurt and anger would burst forth, like fire from a dragon's belly – and you'd pick up a gun. You'd visit the rage not upon your father who was dead and forgotten and out of reach – but upon your husband, the man who had taken his place in your life, who loved you and shared your bed." (Michaelides 273) This quote perfectly explains the effects of the traumatic experiences may have not surfaced earlier but they do when she realises that the only person, she loved the most – her husband Gabriel had been involved in an extra-marital affair. Thus, leading to the grave decision of killing him and her subsequent silence as a coping mechanism. Alicia describes how she felt when she heard about her husband's response to the stalker's question – of how he would never choose her and this resonated with the incident in her childhood when her father said Alicia should have died

instead of the mother Eva. “There was silence. Everything stopped. Inside my body, every cell deflated, like dead petals falling from a flower.” (Michaelides 324)

The four novels have explored a range of Criminological theories that have helped with delving into a deeper understanding of each of the psychological thrillers and as to what revolves around and inside the mind of a criminal. Hence, establishing the fact that crime fiction can be a way to understand and prevent growth of criminals in the society

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Fiction v/s Reality**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

As the definitions of crime fiction have already been explored and knowing that it could be written through inspirations borrowed from real-life crimes there are certain similarities as well other aspects that make one differ from the other.

In both, real-life crimes and crime fiction, the motive for the crime is often a key factor in understanding why it was committed. The motive could be greed, jealousy, revenge, or some other factor, and this is what helps the investigators in real life and the readers reading crime fiction to understand the perpetrator's mindset.

Another similar aspect present in both the parties is investigation. Both real-life crime and crime fiction involve some form of investigation, whether it's conducted by law enforcement officials or by the protagonist of the story. In both cases, clues must be gathered, witnesses interviewed, and evidence analysed in order to solve the crime.

Just as in real life, the consequences of committing a crime in crime fiction are severe. Whether it's imprisonment, fines, or social ostracism, criminals in both realms often face significant consequences for their actions.

Finally, both real-life crime and crime fiction can shed light on the complexities of human nature. In both cases, criminals are often motivated by a range of factors, including fear, greed, and a desire for power or control. Similarly, law enforcement officials and detectives in both real life and fiction must navigate their own biases, motivations, and personal histories in order to effectively investigate and solve crimes. Some of the differences between crime fiction and real-life crimes are highlighted below:

Fictional crime stories are written with the intention to entertain the readers as well as be informative and while they have the freedom to incorporate dramatic events and have a clear resolution where the culprit is identified and punished, reality is often more complex and can have crimes that are much more difficult to solve. Real-life investigations often involve many dead ends, false leads, and painstaking work by law enforcement officials.

Furthermore, in crime fiction, the role of law enforcement is often romanticized and glorified and detectives and profilers are often portrayed as brilliant and heroic figures who can solve complex cases with ease. However, in reality, law enforcement officials often face significant challenges such as budget constraints and limited resources that can hinder their ability to solve crimes.

While crime fiction can be entertaining and engaging, it is important to remember that it is a fictionalized representation of crime and law enforcement. It can provide a glimpse into the criminal justice system and the psychology of criminals, but it should not be taken as a 100% accurate depiction of the crimes committed in real life and its investigation.

#### **4.2 Case Study No. 01 – Ted Bundy**

Ted Bundy was a notorious American serial killer who terrorized young women in the 1970s. Born Theodore Robert Cowell on November 24, 1946, in Burlington, Vermont, Bundy grew up in a middle-class family with his mother and four siblings. His mother never revealed the identity of his father, and he was raised to believe that his grandparents were his parents and his mother was his older sister.

Bundy was a bright and charismatic student who excelled academically and was well-liked by his peers. He attended the University of Washington, where he majored in psychology and became involved in Republican politics. During this time, he began to commit a series of burglaries and sexual assaults in the Seattle area.



In 1974, Bundy moved to Utah to attend law school at the University of Utah. It was here that he began his killing spree, which would ultimately claim the lives of at least 30 young women across seven states. Bundy would often approach his victims in public places, such as parks and college campuses, and lure them into his car by pretending to be injured or disabled. Once they were inside, he would overpower them and take them to a secluded location, where he would sexually assault and murder them.

Bundy's killing spree came to an end in 1978 when he was arrested in Florida for driving a stolen car. Police soon discovered evidence linking him to several murders, and he was charged with the murder of two young women. Bundy initially represented himself in court but eventually hired a team of lawyers. He became known for his charm and charisma in court, often acting as his own lawyer and manipulating the proceedings.

Despite the overwhelming evidence against him, Bundy maintained his innocence and claimed that he was the victim of a conspiracy. He even managed to escape from prison twice, once in 1977 and again in 1978. During his second escape, he travelled to Florida and committed several more murders before being recaptured. Bundy was eventually convicted of three murders and sentenced to death. He was executed in the electric chair in 1989, after spending more than a decade on death row.

The case of Ted Bundy is a chilling reminder of the dangers posed by serial killers and the difficulty of bringing them to justice. Bundy's intelligence, charm, and ability to manipulate those around him made him a particularly dangerous criminal. His case also highlighted the importance of forensic evidence in solving crimes, as well as the need for more effective methods of tracking and apprehending serial killers.

This case is similar to the fictional criminal character Dix Steele as he portrays similar characteristics like a personality that's charming, filled with misogyny and suffering from borderline and narcissistic personality disorders. Apart from these characteristics, if Ted was

to be analysed with the help of criminological theories, the antisocial personality theory would suggest that Ted Bundy was a psychopathic individual who lacked empathy, remorse and a sense of responsibility. He was also impulsive and immensely self-centred including his charming personality which allowed him to manipulate others and the social learning theory which would state that he picked up his violent behaviours after his involvement with the Republican Politics.

### **Case Study No. 02 – Christian Gerhartsreiter**

Christian Gerhartsreiter, also known as Clark Rockefeller, is a German-born impersonator who posed as a member of the wealthy Rockefeller family in the United States. Gerhartsreiter was born in 1961 in Bergen, Germany, and grew up in a middle-class family. He moved to the United States in 1978 on a student visa to attend the University of Wisconsin, but he dropped out after a year. After moving to the U.S. in his late teens, Gerhartsreiter lived under a succession of aliases while variously claiming to be an actor, a director, an art collector, a physicist, a ship's captain, a negotiator of international debt agreements, and an English aristocrat.

Gerhartsreiter's first known alias was Christopher Chichester, which he used while living in San Marino, California, in the 1980s. He then assumed the identity of Christopher Crowe, a character from a novel he had read, and moved to New York City in the 1990s. He became involved with a wealthy family, the von Bülow family, and worked as a personal assistant to Claus von Bülow.

In the late 1990s, Gerhartsreiter began using the name Clark Rockefeller and claimed to be a member of the famous Rockefeller family. He moved to Boston, Massachusetts, and married a wealthy woman, Sandra Boss, whom he had met through a dating service. The

couple had a daughter together, but their marriage fell apart in 2007, and Boss filed for divorce.

During the divorce proceedings, Gerhartsreiter abducted his daughter and fled to Baltimore, Maryland, where he was arrested. He was charged with parental kidnapping and later convicted and sentenced to four to five years in prison.

While in prison, Gerhartsreiter was investigated for the murder of John Sohus, a man who had disappeared in 1985 in California. Sohus and his wife, Linda, had been living in a guest house on the property of Gerhartsreiter's former landlord, and Linda's remains were discovered in 1994. Gerhartsreiter was eventually charged with the murder of John Sohus, and in 2013, he was found guilty and sentenced to 27 years to life in prison. He is known for his elaborate lies and the ease with which he was able to fool people into believing his false identities.

As the strain theory suggests, Christian was driven by his urge to be wealthy which was not possible being a part of a middle-class family and through his various aliases he was able to fund a lavish lifestyle for himself. He needed their money to buy his extensive art collection, antique cars, and hand-tailored suits — because he didn't actually have any money of his own. This case is similar to that of fictional Mr. Tom Ripley in terms of the sociopathic personality, the impersonations and switching of identities to enjoy someone else's life and luxury.

#### **4.4 Case Study No. 03 – David Berkowitz**

David Berkowitz, also known as the Son of Sam, is a notorious American serial killer who terrorized New York City during the summer of 1977. He was born on June 1, 1953, in Long Island to Betty Broder and Joseph Kleinman who named Richard David Falco. However, he was given up for adoption as his father claimed to have nothing to do with him. In June

1953, he was adopted by Nathan and Pearl Berkowitz, who renamed him David Richard Berkowitz. He grew up in the Soundview section of the Bronx with mostly Jewish and Italian families. During his childhood, he faced some challenging situations such as his mother Pearl, slapping him in the face for coming home with sand on his head and hitting his friend Lory on the head with a gun. His parents told him that he was adopted when he was only seven years old.

In 1960, he was hit by a car and suffered head injuries. A few months later, he ran into a wall and hit his head resulting in injuries. As a kid he was very good at baseball, especially throwing the ball. In the 1961, he was hit in the head with a pipe and also watched a girl die after being hit by a car. At 11 years old, he began complaining about monsters in his head that would trouble him and the fright made him sleep with bright lights on, this angered his parents. During his childhood, he witnessed several deaths, including those of children and animals and at the age of 12 began setting hundreds of fires and killing and torturing animals. By the age of 14, he was described as big for his age, a loner, and felt different and less attractive. He was teased in school for his chubbiness and didn't have many friends because he would not know how to interact with them as he had no siblings.

Berkowitz's criminal career began in the mid-1970s when he began setting fires in his neighbourhood. He was arrested several times for arson, and in 1975, he was sent to a psychiatric hospital for evaluation after he set a fire in a hotel. He was released after a short time, and in 1976 he committed his first murder, shooting and killing 18-year-old Donna Lauria and wounding her friend, Jody Valenti.

Over the next year, Berkowitz went on a killing spree, targeting young couples parked in cars. He killed five more people and wounded seven others before being captured by police in August 1977. During this time, he sent letters to the police and the media, taunting them with cryptic messages and hints about his next target.

The letters, which were signed “Son of Sam,” became a major part of the investigation and added to the panic and fear in New York City. The police eventually traced the letters to Berkowitz’s apartment in Yonkers, where they found evidence linking him to the murders.

Berkowitz was arrested on August 10, 1977, and initially denied any involvement in the killings. However, he soon confessed to the murders and claimed that he was commanded to kill by a demon who possessed his neighbour’s dog. He also claimed that he had acted alone and that he had no accomplices. Berkowitz’s trial began on May 8, 1978, and lasted for two weeks. He pleaded guilty to all of the murders and was sentenced to six consecutive life sentences in prison.

After his arrest, Berkowitz underwent extensive psychiatric evaluation, and he was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. He has since expressed remorse for his crimes and has stated that he was “lost” at the time of the killings.

In 1993, Berkowitz became a born-again Christian and began calling himself the “Son of Hope.” He has since become a chaplain at the prison where he is serving his sentence and has spoken out against violence and crime.

Some experts believe that he may have had undiagnosed mental health issues, including schizophrenia, while others believe that he was simply a cold-blooded killer. The psychological profile of the killer which was released described him as, “Neurotic, schizophrenic, and paranoid” and “probably shy and odd, a loner inept in establishing personal relationships, especially with women.” Regardless of the cause, the Son of Sam case continues to fascinate and horrify people around the world.

This case runs many parallels to the fictional killer Francis Dolarhyde right from the records of trauma from a tough childhood, subject to bullying, rejection from parents, exposure to violence and death while still too young, multiple injuries to the head and

schizophrenic disorder which claimed to have been the cause of Berkowitz' actions. He had felt that he was directed by a demon who had possessed the neighbour's dog and Francis Dolarhyde claimed to solely act upon the command of the dragon, a dragon that was actually formed by the traumatic memories of his childhood with his abusive grandmother. Another similarity between the two is their way of communicating with the investigators through letters and this showed their need for attention. Not to forget that both the criminals suffered mental disorders that pushed them to the criminal point.

Like the case of the fictional character, Francis Dolarhyde, the psychodynamic theory can be applied as a lens to analyse the case of David Berkowitz and his unethical actions that were driven by his disturbed and distorted psyche. The exposure to death and violence at a young age as well as neglect from his parents worsened his mental condition and it escalated to a point from which there was no turning back.

Studying the similarities of crime in real life and crime fiction can provide valuable insights for readers and researchers. Crime fiction often draws inspiration from real-life crimes and criminal behaviour, and studying the similarities between the two can help readers understand the motivations, methods, and consequences of criminal activity.

Comparing and contrasting real-life crime and crime fiction, can help readers gain a deeper understanding of the criminal mind and the social, economic, and cultural factors that contribute to criminal behaviour. They can also learn about the criminal justice system and the challenges that law enforcement and other professionals face in solving crimes and bringing criminals to justice.

Moreover, studying the similarities of crime in real life and crime fiction can help readers develop critical thinking skills, such as analysing evidence, identifying patterns, and making connections. It can also foster empathy and understanding for victims of crime and their families, as well as for law enforcement officers and other professionals who work to

combat crime and protect society. Thus, studying the similarities of crime in real life and crime fiction can provide readers with a richer, more nuanced understanding of crime and criminal behaviour, as well as the broader social and cultural context in which they occur.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **Conclusion**

Crime fiction has entered the canon of literature and is relevant with the aid of innumerable texts and critical works. The feature that makes it a huge success is its ability to excite the readers, challenge their intellectual abilities and involve them in the gradual unravelling of the mystery keeping the readers hooked. Apart from that it is also a genre that closely reflects the socio-political, historical and cultural aspects of society. Crime fiction allows the readers the pleasure of witnessing criminal acts and it being solved with the skills of an intelligent detective. Apart from that, satisfaction of the readers' desire for order, rational resolutions, and the triumph of good over evil and innocence over guilt, is achieved by the reveal of the culprit.

There are varying views on the value and significance of crime fiction as a literary form. Some critics view crime fiction purely as a source of entertainment which lacks in literary value, they state that it focuses on sensationalism thus, being an easy read and escape for interested audience. On the other hand, critics state that crime fiction is an important form of literature because of its possession of literary qualities such as rich characterisation, use of multiple literary devices and various themes that stimulate the moral conscience of the reader. It informs, addresses and provides insightful knowledge to the society about crime, justice, morality and social inequality. Crime novels also analyse different kinds of criminals and their personality and behaviours and through its informative power, crime fiction becomes a reflection of the world we live in.

In this way, crime fiction aids readers to delve deep into comprehending and analysing the physical and psychological condition of a criminal and the universal truths about good and evil as well as justice and morality.



Hence, it is proved that crime fiction is informative as it sheds light on the social and cultural issues like social upheaval or political turmoil based on the time and setting in which the novel is written. This helps provide a lens to the readers to view the challenges and struggles faced by people in real life. For instance, Dorothy B. Hughes' novel *In a Lonely Place* portrays very brilliantly the post-World War II scene along with the societal paranoia that is present at a time like this considering the rate of crimes in that particular society. Crime fiction also challenges societal norms and conventions by creating characters that will push the boundaries of what is considered as acceptable behaviour and this aims at raising awareness about morality and ethics. The character Thomas Ripley in Patricia Highsmith's novel, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* who lost all his moral grounds and crossed the line by committing a ruthless crime solely because of the dissatisfaction he built up in himself and further utilised his talent of impersonation for his own immoral selfish needs. This genre is also proven to be insightful as it offers an understanding of psychologically complex individuals as well as providing a lot of information about early growth stages that have been exposed to trauma and abuse. Francis Dolarhyde, the criminal from Thomas Harris' *Red Dragon* and Alicia Berenson from Alex Michealides' *The Silent Patient* are characters with complex personalities that have been a result of the trauma they had been exposed to in their early stages of development.

Analysing the criminals through the lens of psychological theories provides a better understanding of law enforcement and the methods that are utilised to punish and correct such criminal behaviours. Additionally, it could also help readers enhance their conduct towards fellow members of society, by exhibiting qualities of empathy, kindness and sympathy as they may be unaware of the hardships others may be enduring.

This proves that crime fiction is a powerful genre that has the ability to educate, reform as well as inform readers about important societal issues. Whether through highlighting social and cultural issues, challenging societal norms or providing insight into the criminal mind, crime fiction can help readers gain better understanding of the complexities of the world around them. By exploring the informative power of crime fiction, readers can develop a profound appreciation for the genre and the valuable insights it offers.

This dissertation therefore justifies my hypothesis that delving into the criminal characters through the medium of crime fiction enhances our means to understand and study modern day criminals and their motives.

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Analysis address	anjali.chaubey.unigoa@analysis.orkund.com

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I hereby declare that the data presented in this Dissertation entitled, "Delving into the Criminal Character: A study of select Psychological Crime Fiction" is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Discipline of English at the Shenoi Goembab School of Languages and Literature, Goa University under the Supervision/Mentorship of Dr. Anjali Chaubey and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will be not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the dissertation. I hereby authorize the University authorities to upload this dissertation on the dissertation repository or anywhere else as the UGC regulations demand and make it available to any one as needed.  
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COMPLETION CERTIFICATE  
This is to certify that the dissertation "Delving into the Criminal Character: A study of select Psychological Crime Fiction" is a bonafide work carried out by Ms. Anuskha Maria Fernandes under my supervision/mentorship in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in the Discipline of English at the Shenoi Goembab school of Languages and Literature, Goa University.  
Dr. Anjali Chaubey Discipline of English Date: 21 April 2023  
Dr. Anjali Chaubey School Stamp Discipline of English Shenoi Goembab school of Languages and Literature Date: 21 April 2023 Place: Goa University  
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